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211.12th

MADONNA PIA

MADONNA PIA

A TRAGEDY

AND THREE OTHER DRAMAS

WRITTEN AND TRANSLATED

BY

SIR THEODORE MARTIN, K.C.B.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCXCIV

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A D A M S



L'ENVOI.

OF the four dramas in this volume, two have hitherto remained unpublished. "Madonna Pia" was written many years ago with a view to performance. It was suggested by a powerful dramatic sketch called "Malaria," in one Act, which had a short life upon the Paris stage. To this sketch two Acts were prefixed, and to these the original, which forms the third Act, was fitted with some necessary adaptations. "The Gladiator of Ravenna," probably the finest piece of dramatic writing produced on the modern German stage, was translated many years ago, and printed for private circulation. "King René's Daughter," from the Danish of Henrik Hertz, having run through two editions, a third has been called for, and it has been included in the present volume. The translation of "The Camp of Wallenstein," which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' has been added to make it accessible in a more convenient form.



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MADONNA PIA

A TRAGEDY

IN THREE ACTS

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

“ Ricorditi di me, che son la Pia ;
Siena mi fe', disfecemi Maremma :
Salsi colui che innanellata pria
Disposando m'avea con la sua gemma.”

—*Purgatorio*, Canto v.

THE tragic circumstances of Madonna Pia's marriage, which Dante has indicated with his usual suggestive power in the few lines above quoted, have been a favourite theme with poets. They seem not incapable of being made interesting on our stage, although the vindictive jealousy of her husband is more akin to Italian than to English nature. The date of the Lady Pia's story is uncertain, but the year 1260 has been selected for the opening of the following drama, as affording a background of interest in the strife of the Guelf and Ghibelline factions, which reached a decisive climax on the 4th of September in that year, in the defeat of the former at Monte Aperto, on the banks of the Arbia, about five miles from Sienna, by the combined forces of Sienna and Pisa, under the command of Farinata degli Uberti. In this memorable battle, of which Dante, in the “*Inferno*,” Canto x., speaks as—

“ Lo strazio, e il grande scempio,
Che fece l'Arbia colorata in rosso,”

about ten thousand of the Guelfs are said to have fallen ; and the rout was so complete that, according to Macchia-

velli, those who escaped took refuge, not in Florence, which city they considered as lost to them, but in Lucca. The defeat was in some measure occasioned by the treachery of Bocca degli Abbati, who, during the engagement, cut off the hand of Giacopo del Vacca de' Pazzi, bearer of the great standard of Florence, which fell into the hands of the Siennese. The poles of this standard are still preserved in the Cathedral at Sienna. It is to this battle that the incidents of the first act are presumed to refer.

The third act of the present tragedy is an adaptation of a drama in one act, by the Marquis de Belloy, produced at the *Comédie Française*, in February 1853, under the name of "La Malaria."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COUNT AGOSTINO DEI TOLOMMEI, a noble Siennese.

GUIDO CHIARAMONTE, his Nephew.

COUNT NELLO DELLA PIETRA, a noble Siennese.

PRIOR of a Convent in the Maremma.

BERTOLDO, }
JACOMO, } Retainers in the service of Count Agostino.
COSIMO, }

FLAVIO, a Gentleman-at-Arms in the service of Count Nello.

MESSENGER.

PIA DEI TOLOMMEI, Daughter of Count Agostino.

MARGHERITA, his Sister.

NINA, a Young Girl in the service of Pia.

The Scene during the first two Acts lies in the vicinity of Sienna, and during the third in the Tuscan Maremma. An interval of six months is supposed to elapse between each Act. Time—A.D. 1260-1261.

“He was justly accounted a skilful poisoner who destroyed his victims by bouquets of lovely and fragrant flowers. The art has not been lost, nay it is practised every day by—the world.”—BISHOP LATIMER.

MADONNA PIA.

The words printed within double quotation marks are to be omitted in representation.

ACT I.

A garden. To the left the entrance of a castellated mansion. In the background a picturesque mountainous country.

JACOMO and BERTOLDO *enter severally.*

JAC. What tidings of the battle?

BERT. Not a word.

Have you heard nothing either?

JAC. No, not I.

For hours I have not seen a soul about.

BERT. I have been watching up there on the tower
Till I can watch no longer. Neither man
Nor horse is to be seen. Oh, what I'd give
To be right in the thick of it!

JAC. 'Tis like

To be a bloody day. The Florentines,
They say, are forty thousand strong, and we
Scarce half the number.

BERT.

"'Tis a heavy odds.

"We've not a man to spare, yet here they leave us
"Like rusty armour nailed against the wall.

JAC. "Ay, there's the grief on't—fretting out our
hearts

"With fears and fancies, when our good swords might
"Be doing yeoman's service in the field."

BERT. Hush! Hark! A horse! There!

JAC. No! 'Tis but the plash
Of the fountain in the court. Yet Jacopo
Should have been back ere this, and Beppo too.

BERT. They'll not show face, not they, till all is done.

JAC. "How! Cravens! Runagates!

BERT.

"No, by the mass!

"A pass of arms is meat and drink to them."

I know their mettle well. My life upon't,
They found the battle raging and struck in,
To have a breathing on their own account.

JAC. They were sent out for news, and not to fight.
Why must they meddle? Brawling makebaits! Zounds,
As if there won't be broken heads enough,
But they must hunt for bloody cockscombs too!

BERT. Nay, you're too hard upon the lads. Why, you
Had done the same yourself, had you been there.

Who was it, eh?—was ever first to join,
And last to leave a fray in days of yore?

"Whose blade was out, and flashing in the sun,
"Ere other men were dreaming of a brawl?

"Not Jacomo's, eh, the fiery Jacomo's?"

"Ha, do you take me, gossip?"

JAC.

"Well, go to!"

"In sooth I was a mad hot-headed knave

"As ever fingered steel. Ah, many's the time

"My blessed Marjory, heaven rest her soul!

"Has begged and prayed me on her knees to sheathe

"My whinger close, and hold my way in peace,

"Let rail who might, or take the wall of me;

"And I have vowed to be a very lamb——,

"And meant to keep my word; but what of that?"

"Next hour, belike, some passing knave would flout

"My lord or me his man, and presto, hey!

"My promises forgot, out flew my sword,

"And rang réveillé round the rascal's ears."

BERT. Rare sport it was to see you! "That back
stroke

"Of yours was never matched before or since.

"How the Pietri used to scud before it!"

JAC. "Like skipjacks as they were!"

BERT.

"Ha!" These were times!

My old heart leaps at the remembrance still.

The saints forgive me! but I'd like a bout

With the Pietri yet before I die.

JAC. Cospetto! so would I. If fight we must,

Let's settle up our ancient scores with them.

I hate these wars of Guelf and Ghibelline.

"'Tis good blood thrown away. We of the herd

"Can scarcely fathom what they're all about.

"To us what matter, which is uppermost?"

"But these Pietri, overbearing dogs,

"We owe them grudge for years of scaith and scorn,
 "They owe us blood for blood, and blow for blow."
 But get ye to the hill! And there perhaps
 You may see something of our men. You know
 The Eagle's Rock—it should command the field.

(They retire up conversing. Exit BERTOLDO. JACOMO occupies himself among the flower-beds gathering a nosegay. Enter MARGHERITA from the castle.)

MAR. 'Tis very strange! She is not in the house.
 I thought to find her here.—Ha, Giacomo,
 Has your young mistress passed this way?

JAC. Yes, madam,
 Some two hours gone, or so, I saw her cross
 The yew-tree walk, and through the lower gate,
 Then climb the hill that fronts the Arbia.
 "Bless her sweet face! How pale she looked! Not one
 "Of her old smiles had she for Giacomo,
 "Not one glance for her flowers! Out on these wars,
 "That they should take the bloom from such a face!
 MAR. "Ah, many's the fair cheek, good Giacomo,
 "These cruel wars will blanch.

JAC. "Why, look you, madam,
 "There was a time I liked the wars full well;
 "When I could bear my part, and this good arm
 "Has made the varlets of the Pietri skip,
 "Or hewed its way through shrinking Florentines.
 "But out! these stirring times are gone for me,
 "And I must creep among my rose-beds here,
 "And see the women folks look pale and wan,
 "Thinking what grief these wars may soon bring home,

“ And therefore say I, out upon these wars !

MAR. “ Gently, good Jacomo, you’ll crush the flowers.

“ They’re not a sword, that you should grasp them so.

JAC. “ No more they are ; I’d nearly ruined them.

“ And then what would my dear young mistress say ?

“ Of all my flowers they’re what she likes the best.”

Beshrew my heart ! I wish she were come back.

These rambles out of bounds are scarcely safe.

MAR. How ! Scarcely safe ! What mean you ?

JAC.

Only this :

“ That there be knaves abroad—some, too, that bear

“ No special goodwill to my master’s house.

“ Rare prize were such a dove for hungry hawk.

MAR. “ Explain yourself.

JAC.

“ I will, my lady. Well,”

You know how fond the lady Pia is

Of wandering by herself for hours on hours,

Sometimes along the hills, or by the stream,

But chiefly here among my garden plots.

It was her way from childhood. Now as then

My eye is on her, wheresoe’er she goes ;

For she is dear to me, if I may be

So bold to say so, as she were my child,

And it would kill me should she come to harm.

Well then, of late, whene’er she stirred abroad,

I saw that she was followed by a man,

Who hovered round her steps, yet kept aloof,

Yea, would for hours sit gazing from yon cliff,

Watching her movements in the garden here !

As he watched her, so I set watch on him

And found he was——

MAR. Yes—who?

JAC. Your ladyship

Would never guess—Count Nello della Pietra.

MAR. Count della Pietra?

JAC. Ay, my haughty Count.

A lonely, silent, melancholy man,
As he was once a proud and froward boy.
Of all his stock him do I like the least.
Proud were they all, and hot as Lucifer :
But then they spoke their rancour openly,
And fought it fairly out, too, when they might ;
But this Count Nello smothers up his hate
Behind that pale and handsome face of his.
Yet for all this you read it in his eye,
That seems to watch, like tiger, for its spring,
Hoarding its hunger till the prey's secure.

MAR. Old enmities, I fear, make you unjust.

“ He is reputed for a noble youth,

“ Accomplished, brave.

JAC. “ Unjust or not unjust,

“ Why does he dog the lady Pia thus?

“ It cannot be for good. No. If I see

“ The kestrel wheeling o'er my dovecot, madam,

“ Full well I know the errand brings him there.”

MAR. You wrong him, Giacomo, be sure you do.

Though old ancestral feuds divide our houses,

No baseness stains the noble name he bears.

Besides, we need not fear him now ; for he

Is, like my brother, with Uberti joined,

Gone to do battle with the Florentines.

JAC. Ay, there it is ! Such leagues I like not. No !

The Tolommei and Pietri should
Be ranged not side by side, but face to face.
Heaven grant there come no ill of it, say I,
And send my master safely home again !

MAR. Amen to that, good Jacomo ! And see,
In happy omen, where your mistress comes.

Enter PIA at the upper end of the garden.

JAC. The saints be praised ! And with a step so light,
I could be sworn she brings some welcome news.

PIA (*advancing*). The day is ours, dear aunt ! The
day is ours !

MAR. Ours, Pia, ours ? What fancy's this !

PIA. No fancy !

I mean the battle has been fought and won,
Won gloriously, and the field remains with us.

MAR. Great heavens, how came you by these tidings ?
How ?

PIA. With mine own eyes I looked upon the fray,
And am myself our victory's messenger.

MAR. It cannot be, rash girl, that you——

PIA. It might

Be wrong, unmaidenly ; perhaps it was ;
But could I sit here listlessly, and still,
In dreamy dalliance with my broidery frame,
When our best blood, perchance, was flowing free,
And a great cause hung in the balance ? No !
There was more terror in the hush of home
Than in the din and ghastly shapes of war.
Fear thronged on fear, until the very blood
Seemed thickening at my heart. So I went forth——

JAC. Right Tolommei blood in every vein !
No wonder she had ne'er a word for me.

PIA. Across the wood and up the mountain-slope
I took my way, scarce knowing where I went.
But the fresh breeze brought coolness to my brow,
And some o'ermastering impulse bore me on,
Till to the summit of the hill I came.
Then on my sight there burst a spectacle
That filled my eyes with wonder, and my heart
With such wild tremors as shook all my frame.
Far o'er the plain beneath the rival ranks
Flashed in the sun, a bright array of war,
Compact, unbroken. Even as I gazed,
The solid mass took motion ; on it came,
And the hosts clashed together in the midst.
Methinks I should have been a man—for I
Yearned to be struggling in that yeasty sea,
That swayed in angry surges at my feet.
Not long the issue wavered ; soon I saw
The mighty standard of the Florentines,
That flung a proud defiance to our arms,
Sink, like a tall ship swallowed by the deep.
Thicker and thicker grew the fray, and then
The tide of steel swept o'er their scattered ranks,
Their horsemen turned in flight, our banners crowned
The slopes where late the Florentines had stood.
The field was ours ; with long triumphant swell
The trumpets rang the tidings through the hills,
And with a cry of joy I turned for home.

MAR. That was no sight, my child, for maiden's eyes.

PIA. So had I thought, had I not seen it. Now,

I would not give the memory of that sight,
That moment's fiery spasm, its throes of joy,
For all that's best in the remembered past.
All former hopes, cares, aims, seemed trivial, mean ;
My soul sprang up full-statured at a bound,
Along each fibre ran the inspiring thrill,
That nerves the arm with all a giant's force,
And with that charging chivalry I swept
O'er prostrate foes to death or victory. (*Retires up.*)

MAR. Methinks we should have tidings of our friends.
Go, Giacomo, ascend the garden tower,
And bring us news betimes of their approach.

JAC. I will, my lady. All my pretty flowers
Are plucked in vain. My mistress heeds them not.

PIA (*observing him for the first time*). Good-morrow,
Giacomo !

(*He bows and presents her with the nosegay.*)

Your flowers shall deck

The caps of our victorious cavaliers. (*Exit JACOMO.*)

MAR. So gay of mood, my child ! And have you, then,
No fears this victory may bring us grief ?

PIA. None ! None ! There's something whispers to
my heart,

A new life opens on me from this day.
No shade shall overcast its dawn, and soon
Shall my dear father fold me in his arms.

MAR. Is there no other than your father, then,
Whose not returning safe would cast a shade
Upon a life that has been cloudless yet ?
Reflect ! Of all our kinsmen is there not—
Not one, a little dearer than the rest ?

PIA. I do not understand—I think not—No!

MAR. Art very sure of that? Not Chiaramonte?

PIA. Oh, my brave cousin Guido! Ah, dear aunt,
That were a loss indeed! My dear, kind cousin,
I was to blame, not to have singled him—
My heart's true brother!

MAR. No more than brother, Pia?
Such title scarcely would content your cousin.

PIA. Why should you think so? Why?

MAR. Because the name
Of brother, be it spoken ne'er so soft,
Jars like a death-knell on a lover's ear.

PIA. A lover's! Guido never thought of love.
He is no sighing cavalier, not he,
No more than I a love-lorn damoselle.

MAR. He never made my ear his confessor,
Yet that he loves you I can see full well.

PIA. That I am dear to him, as he to me,
It is most certain. How could I be less?
We grew together, Guido and myself,
From childhood's budding spring-time: all my first
Remembrances are twined with him—'twas he
First filled my lap with flowers, dried my first tears,
Shared my first sports, first studies. As we grew,
Still was the boy companion of my hours,
Led my young fancies, played, sang, read with me;
Was now my troubadour,—my knight, fast sworn
To bring far kings in homage to my feet:
And as we ripened into graver years,
He was my friend, my dear familiar friend,—
Next to my father valued—whom I'd trust

In sorrow as in sunshine. As we were,
When children we plucked cowslips by the stream,
So are we now ; a brave, kind brother he,
And I his faithful sister. Trust me, aunt,
You dream, to think that I am more to him.

(Retires up.)

MAR. *(alone)*. Would I were sure of that ! Yes, 'tis
too plain,
This is not, nor is aught akin to love.
My gallant boy ! It is not thus with you,
These years of intimacy close and sweet
Have rippled on in sunshine ; they have left
Far deeper prints upon your heart, I fear.

Enter JACOMO and COSIMO.

JAC. This way, this way ! There stands your mistress !
Madam,
A messenger, sent onwards by my lord.
He's close at hand. I heard the bugles ring
Among the pines between us and the town.

PIA. I knew he must be safe.

MAR. Your message, sir ?

Cos. My master sends his loving greetings home.
He comes unscathed and conquering from the war.
With him he brings a guest, a valued guest,
A stranger to his house, and bids prepare
Such tendance as befits his noble state.

MAR. A stranger, said you ?

Cos. Yes, my lady. I
Was bid to say no more, and make despatch.

I've spurred my hardest, but their steeds are fresh,
And I have scarcely headed them a mile.

MAR. No time is to be lost. Come with me, Pia,
And help prepare reception for our guest.

PIA. A stranger, and his name not told to us!
Who can it be, I wonder?

(Exeunt MARGHERITA and PIA into the castle.)

Cos. You are like
To wonder more than ever when you know.
To think, now, such a thing should come about!
"The kite will fondle with the pigeon soon,
"The sheep embrace the wolf, the weasel share
"His rations with the rat." 'Tis out of all
Believing. "What! A Tolommei sit
"At board with the Pietri—pledge the cup
"In wassail with his sworn ancestral foe?
"'Tis monstrous, 'tis unnatural!

JAC. "How is this?
"Out with your story, friend!

Cos. "Why, look you now,
"For what have we been squabbling all these years,
"Scoring each other madly o'er the sconce
"For generations back, and handing down
"A sound, well-grown inheritance of hate,
"If we are now, like brothers, to shake hands,
"Mess in one dish, and quaff Chianti down
"In bumpers to this mongrel amity?"

JAC. Come to the point, man, who is coming?

Cos. Point!

Fine point, indeed! Count Nello della Pietra.

JAC. Count Nello! It can't be. It should not be.

No!—What should make my master mate with him?
Between them flows a sea of blood.—And he,
What makes he with my master?

Cos.

There's the marvel.

They say, Count Nello, when my lord was down
To-day, and struggling for his very life,
Cut through a score of lances, bore him off,
And placed him safely in the ranks again.
Why should Count Nello, now, have done this, tell me?

JAC. 'Tis that which puzzles me.

Cos. Why should he care
To serve his enemy? There's more in this
Than meets the view, say I.

Enter TOLOMMEI *and* COUNT NELLO DELLA PIETRA.

TOL. (*to COSIMO*). Ha, loitering, varlet?
Is this the way you bear my messages?
Begone, sir ! (*Exit COSIMO.*)

Ah, good Jacomo, great news !
It would have made you young again, to see
A field so stoutly fought. But hark ye, friend !
Our troops are hot and weary. Look to them,
Both horse and man ; let them have best of cheer.

JAC. I will, my lord.
TOL. "Where is your mistress? She
"Has had my message, eh?

JAC. "She has, my lord.
TOL. "'Tis well.—Now go"—and, Giacomo, a word !
See to my roan yourself—he has a wound.

(JACOMO *lingers.*)

So, so! You marvel at the guest we bring.
 I thought we should surprise you. Good my lord,
 This worthy fellow—never honester
 Did master suit and service—looks upon you
 With a scant loving eye. I dare be sworn
 He's thinking now, how often he crossed swords
 With the Pietri, in our brawls of yore,
 And feels his fingers itching for a fray.
 Confess now, Giacomo.

JAC. To tell the truth,
 I had some sharp remembrances just then,
 But—but, my lord——

TOL. Nay, never falter, man.
 Count Nello will not think the worse of you,
 That you hate stoutly in your master's cause.
 Strong love, strong hate, right mettle for true hearts!
 And you shall love Count Nello yet—you shall—
 If you love me, as I am sure you do.
 Why, but for him, your house had lost its chief,—
 My Pia—but 'twere best not think of that—
 And home my good steed had come masterless,
 Whose wound, my friend, you should be tending now,
 Instead of listening to your master's prate.

JAC. My lord, we owe Count Nello much. (*Aside.*)
 But still,

I doubt such friendliness at such a hand. (*Exit.*)

NELLO. That man, methinks, will never be my friend.

TOL. Not be your friend! He must, my lord, he shall.
 Old grudges rankle longer with the churl
 Than with the noble; and, in his youth, our feud
 Blazed at its hottest. But the man I love,

My vassals shall regard with friendly eye,
Or they are none of mine. Now, by the mass,
If we forget the past, if we forgive,
Methinks the herd, that feed upon our hand,
May chew the cud of ancient hates in peace.
To you, my lord, I owe my life. Henceforth
We and our house are friends.

NELLO. We shall be so,
If word and deed of mine, and best good will
Can compass aught, my lord.

TOL. Well said ! And I
Shall bless the chance that placed my life in peril,
That I might have to thank you for't. 'Fore heaven,
You shall have better than an old man's thanks ;
Ay, fifty-fold, my lord. I have a child——

NELLO (*aside*). Can he divine ?

TOL. Ha, sir, I see the blood
Mounts to your cheek already. Wait, till you
Shall see her, sir——

NELLO (*aside*). See her ! Oh bursting heart !

TOL. And you are not the man I take you for,
If only for one smile of such a maid——
I will not say her thanks, her heart-warm thanks——
You would not proudly barter life. Ha, ha !
I see I touch you. Oh believe me, sir,
'Tis not the old man's doting. You shall say,
When you have made your eyes rich with her beauty,
All Tuscany shows not her peer. Kind heavens,
Had this day left my Pia fatherless !
Oh, dear my lord, bear with me. The great debt
I owe you overwhelms me——

NELLO.

Speak not so.

Mine is the debt. (*Aside.*) Heaven knows how deep !(*Aloud.*) For I

Do hold me overpaid, that my young sword

Was worthy to be wielded for a life

So precious to my country. But you add

A double guerdon, granting me to see

The joy that melts in your fair daughter's eyes,

To hold her father safe within her arms.

It needs, my lord, a heart as lone as mine,

A life unsunned as mine, as dark, forlorn,

To know what luxury it is to gaze

On the deep transports of a love so pure.

TOL. A life unsunned ! What's this ? A lonely heart ?

Go to, my lord, we'll cure you of such thoughts.

Young, brave, well-born, you're of the stuff that carves

Fortune and friends out, stand where'er it may,

Your favour such as wins young maidens' hearts——

(*NELLO starts.*)

“Nay, never start, I'm cunning in such lore——

“An eye, that tempts to fathom what it broods,

“A lip to break whose firmness into smiles,

“Beauty would give her heart up.” Look you, sir,

You wrong yourself, your nature, and your gifts,

To tell me of a life unsunned, forlorn.

Your crow sits blinking in the mist—the eagle

Mounts o'er the clouds, and fronts the glorious sun.

NELLO. True, but its wings have not been clipped
like mine.

I am, you know, the last shoot of a stem,

That once soared high, and spread a bounteous shade,

But now stands withered, bare, a blighted trunk.
All those that might have loved me lost in youth,
And prizing not the things the world calls friends,
I've lived so long alone, a dreamer's life,
I fear me much, I've lost the nerve to soar.

TOL. Come out into the sunshine. Look around you.
Mix with our life. This mood will pass, and soon
You'll find yourself careering on free wing.
Lonely at least you shall not be. True friends
You'll ever find in me and mine, and this
Is but the first of many days, that yet
Shall flood your life with sunshine. Get we in ;
I long to tell my Pia what she owes you.

Enter JACOMO. TOLOMMEI retires up and addresses him.

NELLO (*aside*). Oh heaven ! The one wild dream of
many a month
Is now made real, and I shrink before it.
Should she look coldly on me ! What am I,
That she should heed me more than other men ?
Fool, fool ! Or wherefore should I think her heart
Folds not some other image in its core ?
Oh, that were madness !

TOL. Come, I wait for you.
He hears me not. A dreamer, by my faith !

NELLO (*still in a reverie*). One plunge, and I sink
stifled in the ooze,
Or rise triumphant with my priceless pearl.

TOL. Wilt go with me ? They wait for us within.

NELLO. Your pardon, some old thoughts——

TOL.

Come on, my lord.

We'll show you that shall make you quit your dreams.

No talking more of lonely hearts! Come on!

(They retire up and exeunt into the castle, as GUIDO CHIARAMONTE enters from the other side.)

GUIDO. Too late, too late! Oh most unlucky chance!

This comes now of distinction! What the plague,

Of all men else why should Uberti choose

Me, simple me, for offices of trust?

Why charge me with despatches for his friends

In Florence, just when I had set my heart

On stealing one sweet half hour with my cousin,

And finding out my fate for good or ill,

Before my uncle came? For all my spurring

He's here already. What a chance to lose!

Oh, had I come before her, with the flush

Of battle on my cheek, and its full pulse

Still throbbing in my breast, and laying down

My maiden laurels at her feet, had poured

All the full tide of year-long hoarded love,

I ne'er had dared in a more tranquil hour

To give free vent, how might I not have thriven!

But it is past, the happy moment's lost—

My dream dissolved. And now I scarcely care

To see her with a throng of gazers by—

With strangers, too, for such are here, I see—

To speak to her cold words which all may hear,

And take a common greeting from her lips,

When I had hoped—I will not see her so,

But straight to horse, and bide a happier time.

(Is going out, when he is met by JACOMO.)

JAC. Leave us again so soon, dear master Guido ?
Why, how is this ? You have not been within !
My master scarce will think this courteous,
And, Lord ! what will the lady Pia say ?

GUIDO. Nay, Jacomo, they're busy—so am I.
I should ere this have been a league tow'rds Florence.
They need not know I have been here at all ;
And if they should, say that my charge was urgent.
I halted but to bring your mistress news
Of our success, and my dear uncle's safety ;
But he is here before me, as I learn,
And every minute lost may cost me dear.

JAC. Nay, Master Guido, you look worn ! A cup
Of old Chianti, ere you go, were worth
A second pair of spurs. Go in——

GUIDO. I cannot.

JAC. I see, sir, how it is. You fancy not
Our new guest, our new friend ; and think, perchance,
To see him at the Tolommei's board
Would take the savour from the best of cheer !

GUIDO. New guest ! New friend ! What mean you ?

JAC. How ! Not know,

Count Nello della Pietra is within ?
Home came my master with him, hand and glove,
Hot friends, each vying each in courtesies.
And this Count Nello—may the red plague seize him !—
Sits in the halls whose threshold ne'er till now
Was crossed by one of his detested race.

GUIDO. I'm glad of it. I'm very glad of it.
Nay, man, be calm ! He never did us wrong,
And wherefore should we visit on his head

All the mad passions of a day gone by,
 When our forefathers paid *his* wrong for wrong,
 Insult for insult, and with usury too?

JAC. And you say this? You, that I trained myself?
 You, that I taught the manage of a sword,
 I'll not believe that you can brook to owe
 A debt to one of the Pietri? You!

GUIDO. A debt? What debt?

JAC. My master's life. To-day
 When he was down, and stood at bay for life,
 They say Count Nello rescued him.

GUIDO. He did!
 So it was true the rumour that I heard?
 Why, then, I am his debtor too. 'Twas well,
 'Twas nobly done! I would I might have stayed,
 To tender him my thanks among the rest.
 Friend, I shall think the love you bear your lord
 Is cold indeed, if you can hate this man.

JAC. "What call had he to strike in such a cause?"
 "They never loved us, these Pietri, never—
 "Never had cause to love us.

GUIDO. "Noble hearts
 "Demand no better cause for noble deeds,
 "Than that a brave man—be he friend or foe,
 "The rather if a foe—is at a pinch,
 "That needs the succour of a valiant arm."
 Now, as I live, he bears a noble heart,
 This same Count Nello.

JAC. Well, well! Time proves all.
 But I have deep misgivings of some ill,
 When such guests sit at Tolommei's hearth.

GUIDO. Out, croaking owl! I know, when I come back,

I'll find you warm as any in his praise.

But it grows late. Bid them bring out my horse.

(As they are going out, enter PIA from the castle. She does not observe them.)

JAC. I'll look to him myself. But see, my lord,
The lady Pia! You will surely wait
To say a word with her before you go?

GUIDO. I will. Go you and see my horse prepared.

(Exit JACOMO. PIA advances to the front of the stage in a reverie, GUIDO remaining behind.)

PIA. I breathe again! The air is sweet and cool,
And yet I felt a fever fan my cheek,
A stifling in my bosom, as I stood
And heard my father speak. What could it be?
All that he said is eddying in my brain
In wild confusion, and I seem to feel
Count Nello's gaze still rooted on my face,
As then I felt it, though I saw it not.
I ne'er have seen this stranger, ne'er before,
And yet he seemed no stranger to my thoughts.
Is't fancy, or some half-forgotten dream?
What means this sudden tumult in my blood,
This vague disquietude? 'Tis nothing! Nothing?
Can I be sure of that? Some change there is:
What 'tis I know not; but I feel it. Yes,
My flowers are fair and fragrant as before,
The thrush is piping from his myrtle bush,
As yesterday he piped, the sun slopes on

Into the west, majestically calm ;
 They are the same, but do they wear to me
 The self-same aspect yesterday they wore ?
 Or have my eyes beheld a fairer sight,
 Than blossomed flower, or the majestic sun,
 Or has a richer music struck mine ear,
 Than ever rang from throat of sweetest bird,
 That still one form will rise before me—still
 One voice thrill at my heart ? If this should be ?

GUIDO (*aside*). So deeply wrapt ! Oh might I only
 hope,

She missed one 'midst her friends, she fain had seen,
 And I that happy one !

PIA. It was not much
 He said ; but wherefore did it seem, as though
 The tones spoke to me as of something heard
 Long, long ago, and hoarded up till then
 Next to my heart ? 'Tis very, very strange.

GUIDO (*advancing*). What's strange, fair Pia ?

PIA. Ah, dear cousin Guido !

Welcome, thrice welcome !

GUIDO. Thanks, dear Pia, thanks !
 But when did my sweet merry-hearted cousin
 Take to such musings deep, she lets her friend
 Stand by some score of seconds—nay, you did—
 Without a word to say she's glad to see him ?

PIA. Nay, did I so ?

GUIDO. Now would I give the half
 Of my best lands, to be the happy theme
 Of thoughts so close and earnest. Might I hope,
 That in the hour which brought my uncle home

Victorious and unharmed, my Pia had
One thought for cousin Guido?

PIA. Can you doubt?

GUIDO. You did not then forget me? Oh, dear Pia,
Make me assured of that,—let me but dream,
When I am gone, my image finds some niche
In the fair temple of your maiden thoughts,
Where it, perchance, may claim a stray regard,
And I am blest beyond all utterance.

PIA. Does Pia need, then, to assure her cousin,
She is not so untrue to former days,
Or so ungrateful for his kindness past,
She had forgot him now, or ever shall?

GUIDO. I did not think it—could not. But my heart
Yearned for some word—oh, Pia, pardon me—
Some word to say I was remembered there,
Where it were death to think myself forgot.
You are not angry?

PIA. Wherefore should I be?
I would not but be dear to you as ever,
And be remembered ever in your thoughts.

GUIDO. Remembered! Is there any lightest act,
Word, look, of Pia's, I remember not?

PIA. But wherefore talk we of remembrances?
You speak as though we had been parted years,
Not scarce a month.

GUIDO. Pia, it seemed like years.
That month seemed longer than my whole life else.

PIA. That's strange! Yet no. For in that little
month
A world of new pursuits, ambitions, hopes,

The stir of great events, have thronged your life.
So much to do, and done, you thought it long.

GUIDO. It was not that. No, no, it was not that.

PIA. Indeed! What then, dear Guido?

GUIDO (*aside*). Where shall I
Find words to tell her? (*Aloud.*) Pia, I am not
The same as when I parted from you here.
That little month has wrought such change in me,
I scarcely know myself for what I was.

PIA. Such change?

GUIDO. Ay, change! Shall I proceed?

PIA. Go on.

GUIDO. I left you, Pia, a mere giddy boy,
Whose life had fled like a summer day,
Nor knew he had a heart, nor cared to know.
I come, a man, who woke to find his heart
Gone from his keeping ere he knew his loss.
Shall I go on?

PIA. Yes, yes!

GUIDO. How shall I tell
The fever of the spirit, the unrest,
The longings infinite that woke within me,
When first I felt myself alone, my foot
Pressing the threshold of a stormy life!
"Then o'er me rushed remembrance of the past,
"And flooded all my being with a strange
"Bewildered sense of mingled joy and pain."
I plunged amid the tumult of the camp,
Still went that feeling with me;—when I fled
Into the silence of the hills, 'twas there.
Where'er I went, one passion followed me,

Made up an atmosphere of light around me,
By one dear presence haunted, by one voice
Made musical, till life seemed bounded in
By some enchanter's spell. Oh, words are poor,
Weak, vain, to picture that tumultuous sea,
Where joy, hope, fear, contended wave with wave.
Your heart must picture it! Yet how should that,
Which sleeps unruffled as an inland lake,
Reflecting but the sunshine and the stars,
Divine the turmoil of the storm-vext deep?

PIA. I can divine it, Guido.—And this change
You speak of——?

GUIDO. Is a change from thoughtless ease
To passionate aspiring—from the dreams
Of unreflecting youth to the close aims
Of manhood. Said I, aims? There is but one.

PIA. And that one?

GUIDO. Love! For love embraces all.
Our every thought is his, our every deed;
Wealth, honour, fame, we prize them but as means
And ministrants to love.

PIA. Does love so change?

GUIDO. Yes, Pia, yes. It changes all within,
Without us, too. The commonest things of earth
Wear not the semblance to a lover's eyes,
They wear to other men's. He hopes, and then
A giant's spirit swells within his breast,
His step is winged with lightness, and he strides
The earth triumphant. Straight come fears, and lo!
There droops no verier craven 'neath the moon.
Canst thou divine this change—hast thou e'er felt

One touch of it, dear Pia ?

PIA.

I ? I cannot tell—

And yet——

GUIDO. Oh, say thou hast ! Oh, say thy heart
Can read my bosom's secret by its own !
Speak to me, Pia ! Answer me !

PIA.

I cannot !

This is so new, so sudden. A strange world
Seems to dawn forth upon my soul to-day,
And all's confusion still.

GUIDO (*aside*). Shall I urge more,
Or wait till time mature this budding hope ?

PIA (*musingly*). And this is love ! strange witchery,
that wakes

A soul within the soul, blots out the past,
And makes the heart a wonder to itself !

GUIDO. Then thou hast felt this witchery, too ! oh,
joy !

And there's a voice within thy breast will plead
My suit with eloquence more rare than mine !

PIA. Thy suit ? I plead thy suit ? When Guido
woos,

What tongue so skilled to urge it as his own ?

GUIDO. Think thou but so, and I am blest indeed !

PIA. Nay, when thy mistress thinks so, then thou
mayest be.

GUIDO. But has she not——

(*Enter JACOMO.*)

JAC. Your horse, my lord, is ready at the gate.

GUIDO. Plague on the fellow ! Why
Should he come blundering here at such a time ?

JAC. (*aside*). I've half a mind, I'm one too many here.
(*Retires up.*)

PIA. How ! Going ? Now, so soon ? You have
not seen
My father.

GUIDO. Nay, I must set on to Florence.
My duty craves despatch. I am not weary,
And the strong joy that's here (*pressing his heart*) would
bear me on,
Were't twice as far, unflaggingly. But see,
My dear aunt Margherita !

Enter MARGHERITA, from the Castle.

MAR. Guido here !
Welcome, dear Guido, welcome ! We have heard
How gallantly you bore yourself to-day.
My brother longs to see you. Come, niece, come,
Your father asks for you, and wonders why
You left his side so soon.

GUIDO. The fault is mine,
Who have detained her by my prate so long.
But now, farewell, farewell !

MAR. How, what is this ?
(*To PIA.*) Pia, have you no word to keep him here ?
(*To GUIDO.*) You must not leave us so.

GUIDO. Nay, nay, I must.
I bear despatches from Uberti. They
Will be the signal for his friends to strike,

Ere Florence has recovered from the shock
 Of this day's loss. I have outstayed my time,
 But the first hour my duty sets me free
 Shall see me here again. "Such hope have I,
 Would wing me back unbreathed from farthest Ind."
 And so farewell! Dear Pia, till we meet,
 I steer by one sole star. (*Exit.*)

PIA. But, Guido—stay!
 He heeds me not. Ah, me!

MAR. (*to PIA.*) What means all this?
 Pray heaven, she may have found, within her heart
 There vibrate deeper chords than she had dreamed!

(*PIA stands as if lost in meditation, MARGHERITA
 looking at her with apparent surprise. TOL-
 OMMEI and NELLO appear at the door of the
 castle.*)

TOL. Ho! We have found our runaway at last!
 Is this the courtesy ye show our guest?
 Come hither, girl! Young maids, when I was young,
 Would not have shunned such gallant company.
 And now to dine. Your hand, girl, to the Count!

(*NELLO advances and leads off PIA, followed by
 MARGHERITA and TOLOMMEI.*)

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A chamber in the chateau of COUNT TOLOMMEI.

Enter TOLOMMEI and MARGHERITA.

TOL. Deny me to my daughter! By the Gods,
'Tis not to be endured! Was it for this
I gave him up my darling, frankly gave her,
Unsunned my home, that she might gladden his,
To have her now debarred from me? So, so,
It seems my wish is nothing—his is all.
He grants me speech with my own flesh and blood,
Just when his sovereign will and pleasure prompts;
Withholds it, when his surly fit is on.
I'll not endure it.

MAR. What's the matter, brother?

TOL. Insult and wrong's the matter! Sister, sister,
Why did we give our Pia to this man?
Where were our eyes, our hearts, they told us not,
He was no mate for her?

MAR. Why, how is this?
What has occurred?

TOL. "Heavens! He shall answer it,

His love appeared so absolute, so deep,
That I consented—nay, I backed his suit,
And sacrificed my daughter.

MAR. 'Tis not so.
She loved Count Nello. Her whole heart had gone
Into his keeping, ere your wishes spoke.

TOL. I'll not believe it! No. I fear me much
'Twas not her heart she followed, but my wish.

MAR. Brother, it was her heart, her heart alone.
She might have given't elsewhere—oh, would she had!
But she chose him.

TOL. Elsewhere? Elsewhere? What mean you?

MAR. Her cousin Guido——

TOL. What of him?

MAR. Loved, wooed her.

Dear as he was, and well we know, how dear,
What hold he had on Pia's heart she found
Full soon was nothing, set against the sway,
The sovereign sway, it yielded to Count Nello.

TOL. Guido loved Pia—sought her? Oh, ye gods,
And I ne'er thought of this! Forgot him, when
I most should have remembered! He away,
I let another take his place beside her,
Woo her, and win her, and this other now—
It makes me mad! And Guido loved my girl?
How could he else? And had the foremost claim
On my regard; yet I forgot him, gave her
To a stranger, who now shuts her from my heart,
And in that act made wreck of Guido's peace!

MAR. Guido returns to-day.

TOL. To-day?

MAR. This very day.
Here is his letter, writ from Florence, where
He only tarries to report the issue
Of his late mission to the Emperor,
Then hastens to Sienna.

TOL. Oh, ye gods,
How shall I meet him?

MAR. Worse is yet to tell.
He does not know of Pia's marriage.

TOL. How!
Not know of that? The letter that I wrote?

MAR. 'Tis plain he ne'er received.

TOL. True. Now I think,
He sent no answer. Oh, I see it all,
And now he is to learn from my lips—mine—
The heaviest news shall ever load his heart.
"He left us, sister, full of promise, hope,
"He comes back, charged with honours, trust, renown,
"To seek her for whose sake he won them all,
"And finds her gone!" (*A trumpet sounds without.*)

MAR. Hark, hark!

TOL. 'Tis he! 'Tis he!
I'd know his bugle 'mongst a thousand, sister.
Its ring was ever gallant. "I can hear
"The flutter of his heart upon its tones,
"Half trembling, half triumphant." Sister, I
Dare not be first to shiver into dust
The fabric of his hopes. Best that he learn
The truth from you! Poor boy, from you he'll take
The balsam with the wound. "Men shrink from men,
"When the heart's pierced, and stifle with the grief

"Would find a vent, were gentler woman near.

"'Tis kinder for us both!" You'll tell him, sister?

MAR. I will.

TOL. Thanks, thanks! Heaven comfort my poor boy!

(Exit.)

MAR. And comfort thee, old man! My heart fore-
bodes

Thou'lt need its aid. Not Guido's peace alone,
But Pia's too is blighted by this marriage.
She wed a dream, an image she had clothed
With her own spirit's radiance. This Count Nello,
She deemed the pattern of all nobleness,
Is close, suspicious, cruel; "What's worse, jealous.
"His fetters even now begin to gall;
"He'll link the rivets closer, till they bite
"Into his young bride's soul—and then 'twill rend
"Its shackles, or be rent—each way, despair!
"He loves her, yet he doubts her, doubts himself,
"And he will find some cue for his distrust,
"Or, finding not, will make one. When did such
"As he lack cause for jealousy?" Great heavens,
Should he e'er come to know of Guido's love,
'Twere fatal. He must never learn it, never.
Should he but see him, his suspicious eye
Would read confession in his rival's looks,
And his dark thoughts piece out a tale to make
Revenge a duty. Meet they must not. Hark,
'Tis Guido's step!

GUIDO *(enters rapidly through door in centre)*. I'll
find them here, you say?

Ah, my kind aunt, your welcome still the first!

MAR. Dear Guido, welcome to us all !

GUIDO. The dear
Old place ! What joy to look on it again !
Time has been busy with me since we parted,
But it has left me all unaltered here.

(*Touching his heart.*)

Cities most fair I've seen, but none looked half
So fair as our Sienna,—crested peaks
I've crossed, that dwarf our hills to pigmies, yet
They seemed not half so near to heaven as these ;
Kind words, kind looks have hailed me, none so sweet
As I bore with me in my memory ;
Fair faces, too, have smiled on me, but none
So fair as one I hoarded in my heart,
That was my talisman by day and night,
Through weariness and danger. Happy hour,
That sees me back with all I love again !

MAR. (*aside, and turning away*). Happy ? Alas !
Alas !

GUIDO. Why, what's the matter ?
You do not seem so glad to see me. Speak,
There's no mischance ? My uncle ?

MAR. He is well.

GUIDO. And Pia ?

MAR. Well.

GUIDO. Thank heaven for that ! And yet
Your looks belie your words. All is not well.
Why come they not to greet me ? Where's my uncle ?

MAR. He left me even now.

GUIDO. What ! He heard my step,
Yet waited not to welcome me ? Speak, speak,

There is some mystery here. Torture me not.
It is not Pia—no, no, look at me,
No words, no words, but tell me with thine eyes,
That she is safe! Then come what misery else,
And I can bear it.

MAR. She is safe.

GUIDO. Hast thou
No ampler words to still my fears than these?
If she be safe and well, why comes she not?

MAR. She—she is not here.

GUIDO. Not here? Why, how is this?
When was it that my uncle learned to spare
His Pia from her home?

MAR. Her home no more.

GUIDO. Where should her home be? Wherefore do
you strain me
Thus piecemeal on the rack? Out with your tale!
My heart is at your feet. In mercy, speak.
Tell me of Pia, of my love!

MAR. She is
Another's bride.

GUIDO. She? She another's? She?

MAR. Yes, dearest Guido, yes! Some three month's
since

She wedded the Count Nello della Pietra.

GUIDO. Wedded Count Nello—she, my Pia, mine,
My own vowed love, whose latest words to me
Were words of sweet assurance—she to wed
Another! She! Oh, false one, false! Yet no,
She has been forced to this. Yes! I remember,
He saved my uncle's life—she his reward,

Her heart the sacrifice.

MAR. No, Guido, no !

There was no force, no sacrifice.

GUIDO. I'll not

Believe it. She was mine. What needed vow,
When all my life was but one vow of love,
And all her looks, words, acts, acceptance of it?
Why, why was I not here? This ne'er had been.
Oh cruel! Where my trust was fullest, there
To be most deeply stung!

MAR. Nay, wrong us not !

Wrong not your cousin ! With her hand her heart
Went freely.

GUIDO. She shall tell me so, and then,
Belike, I shall believe it. I will see her,
And have assurance from her lips of all.
I deemed my travel ended ; there is yet
A point beyond.

MAR. "*(aside)*. This must not be. Yet how
" Shall I prevent him?" (*Aloud.*) Guido, you know well
That I have loved you ever,—have I not?
Some claim I have upon your trust, and now
I urge it. You shall see her, but not now.

GUIDO. Why should I pause?

MAR. For her sake. Think, she is
Another's bride. You would not have her lord
Make question of the love he deems his own?

GUIDO. Was I considered?

MAR. "*(aside)*. I must tell him all."
(Aloud.) Count Nello keeps close watch upon his bride.
 You marvel, yet 'tis so. Already we

Are fearful for her happiness ; a creature
 So frank, so noble, mated to a lord,
 Whose love is strangely mingled with distrust.
 " He knows not how you grew up, side by side,
 " Nor dreams love's homage ever reached her ears
 " From other tongue than his." I fear me much,
 Came he to learn the story of your youth,
 His jealous doubts would grow to certainties,
 Then farewell peace for ever ! Think of this.
 Be patient. Leave to me to find the means
 To bring you to your cousin. Hush ! my brother !
 No word of this to him !

Enter TOLOMMEI.

TOL. (*embracing GUIDO*). My gallant boy !
 How shall I look on you ! Indeed, I knew not
 How 'twas 'twixt you and Pia ! Yet I ought—
 Oh purblind fool ! Ah, Guido !——

GUIDO. Not a word !

The past is past, and I will learn to bear.

TOL. Rail on me, spurn me ! Call me dotard, ass,
 Ingrate, unnatural ! All these I am,
 And only fit for scorn.

GUIDO. Nay, uncle, nay !

TOL. I am, I am ! You wronged, and Pia wrecked,
 Yes, Guido, wrecked ! And all through me. I see
 My folly now, but all too late, too late !

GUIDO. Think not so sadly. Wherefore should she not
 Be happy ? Nobly wedded—a kind lord——

TOL. Kind ! He is hard, cold, selfish ; sets even now

SCENE II.

*A Garden.*JACOMO *and* FLAVIO *enter.*

FLA. I tell you, fellow, 'tis Count Nello's orders.

JAC. And, fellow! I tell you, I do not care,
Though 'twere ten times his orders. Fellow! Zounds,
If you don't mend your manners, by the mass,
I'll cudgel you into civility.
A pickthank, sneaking knave!

FLA. (*half draws his sword, then puts it back*). Pshaw!
Let him rail!

Who heeds the barking of a toothless cur?

JAC. Oh, you do well to put your rapier up.
The sight of steel might give your valour qualms.
Fellow! Go to! Many's the bloody crown
I've given your betters for a less affront.

FLA. Most valiant ancientry, the time may come,
And welcome, too, to put your threats to proof,
When, if I don't avenge these bloody crowns,
I'll give you leave to call me jackanapes.
But meanwhile you have heard my lord's commands,—
My lord's and yours—and look they be obeyed!

(Exit FLAVIO.)

JAC. My lord, indeed! I serve Count Nello? I?
'Tis not to do his bidding I am here.
"On such condition doomsday should have come,
"Ere I had set a foot within his gates.

“ The Lady Pia, at her wish I came,
“ And her and only her will I obey.”
His orders, quotha? Save with his consent
I must not seek my lady’s presence, eh?
And so ’tis come to this! But they shall find
I have an eye upon them. His commands!
I’ll seek her when I will and where I may,
And never ask his leave. I fear him not.
Although he be her lord,—woe worth the hour!
He is no lord of mine. Till she forbid,
I’ll come and go as freely as before,
And see who shall prevent me. Sunset, hey,
And not a flower cut yet! Whom have we here?
(*Enter COSIMO.*)

Now, as I live, ’tis Cosimo! Why, man,
I scarcely knew you in this brave attire.
Who ever would have thought to see you here?
Cos. ’Faith, friend, I’ve risen somewhat in the world
Since last we met. I’ve travelled, Jacomo;
The rolling stone for once has gathered moss,
A comfortable moss, the bounteous growth
Of right good living and of right good wages.
Service is no inheritance, they say;
But I protest, to serve Count Guido is.

JAC. Count Guido? You went with him, so you
did.

And is the Count come back?

Cos. Am I come back?

His page, his equerry, his man-at-arms,
Chief conservator of his lordship’s person,
The very shadow of his presence, I.

You see me here. Then judge, if he's come back.

JAC. And I not know it? Times are changed,
when he

Could be so near, and yet not seek me out.

But I'm a fool! How should he seek me here?

COS. Why there it is, friend! Times are changed
indeed.

"To echo people's words is scarce polite—

"Oh, trust me, we that travel know what's what—

"But if I were to die for't, I must say,"

Who ever would have thought to see you here?

JAC. Ay, who indeed?

COS. How came it all about?

JAC. That's more than I can tell, or any man.

The foul fiend had some hand in it, I think,

To turn the Lady Pia's thoughts away

From her own kin to this Count Nello here!

COS. Who could have thought it, and so sudden too?

JAC. Oh, ne'er sped wooing quicker. "At the first

"She shrank before him like a fluttered dove,

"But day by day he came, and day by day,—

"There must have been some witchcraft in his eye—

"She trembled closer to the falconer's lure,

"Until he held her fast within his toils."

COS. And the Count Tolommei?

JAC. Why, it seemed

As though he'd set his heart upon the match.

It was to solder up old feuds, he said,

To join their lands in one broad seignory,

And Lord knows what beside. Enough, he gave

His frank consent, and there's the story told.

Cos. Marry in haste, repent at leisure, eh?
The saw holds good, I fancy?

JAC. Who says so?
Count Nello dotes on her, and she on him,
As fondly as the day they plighted hands.
Who dares to say, then, they repent the bond?

Cos. Oh, nobody says so; but I can tell
As well as most folks, when the wind's at east.
Whate'er the lady and her lord may be,
Count Tolommei has grown cold, I'll swear.
"Were all things as they should be, why should he
"Be grown so choleric, so sharp and sour?

JAC. "An old man's failing! Nothing strange in
that.

Cos. "Ay, but" he visits not the Count, nor comes
The Count to visit him. That's strange, you'll own.
Not quite like new-made sire and son-in-law?

JAC. A chance, a chance! (*Aside.*) Confound this
curious fool!

(*Aloud.*) Count Nello has had business on his hands.

Cos. Indeed! Well, well, it's no affair of mine.

(*Aside.*) A close old dog. I'll try another tack.

(*Aloud.*) This letter (*showing letter*), eh? Now what
may this portend?

JAC. (*coming close up to him, and looking anxiously
round*). A letter, and for whom?

Cos. Why, look and see.

JAC. "For whom, I say? Speak low!"

Cos. The Lady Pia.

JAC. And from whom?

Cos. From my master, the Count Guido.

JAC. Count Guido? (*Snatches the letter, and hides it hastily in his breast.*) Hush!

Cos. Well, now, this is passing strange.
Count Guido gives me charge to find you out,
To give this letter to no hand but yours,
First making sure that nobody is by.
“ ‘ Be wary, close, and secret ! ’ was his charge.
“ Well, I do find you, nobody is by.
“ I show the letter,—up you smother it,
“ As it would spread infection on the air,
“ And whisper, and cry hush, as though each shrub
“ Contained an eavesdropper. ’Tis very odd.”
Some secret embassy,—so secret, zounds,
They keep it from the ambassador himself!

JAC. You had no other message?

Cos. None.

JAC. That’s well.

Now, if you’ll profit by a friend’s advice,
You’ll quit this place as fast as you can post ;
“ For should they find you in his lordship’s grounds,
“ I will not answer for your squireship’s ears.

Cos. “ How ? ”

JAC. The order’s strict to keep intruders out.
’Tis growing dusk, and these Pietri churls
Might fairly fail to recognise a friend
In an old foe of such long standing—hey ?
So, friend, good even !

Cos. But ——

JAC. You’d best be gone.

Yonder goes Messer Flavio. Let him see you,
And he’ll not leave a whole bone in your skin.

Cos. Now, by my valour, I'll not stir a foot.
My rapier lacks an airing. Flavio!
Who's he, that I should strike my flag to him?

JAC. (*aside*). Oh, I must humour this hot fool, I see.
(*Aloud.*) Suppose yours were a secret embassy,—
As 'tis no less—is this the way to do
Your master's will? He charged you to be close,
Wary, and secret. You would court a brawl—
Peril Count Guido's secret? Tush! Your brains
Will serve him better here, man, than your sword.
He's on the rack to know his letter's safe,
And will not stint his ducats for your news.
Away!

Cos. Thou put'st the matter cogently.
I'll go—but not for fear of Flavio.
No, by my valour; no, nor fifty such! (*Exit.*)

JAC. Thank heaven, he's gone! A letter for my lady,
And from Count Guido! They that should have wed!
My dear young master! Better 'twere, perchance,
She saw it not. But can I say him nay?
No, she shall have it. Wherefore not? I was
To see her only by Count Nello's leave!
That was the word! The letter she shall have.
Jealous, my lord? You shall have reason, then.
It could not well have come at fitter time. (*Exit.*)

SCENE III.

A chamber in the castle of COUNT NELLO DELLA PIETRA.

Window in centre, opening on a balcony. Lamp burning on a table, at which COUNT NELLO is discovered seated; FLAVIO standing near him. COUNT NELLO takes papers from table, and hands them to FLAVIO.

NELLO. These for Visconti ; for the Balbi these !
 Away to horse ! Ride as for life and death,
 And meet me with their answers ere the dawn
 In Florence !

FLA. I am gone. (Going.)

NELLO. A word ! You gave
 My orders, none should have admittance here ?

FLA. I did, my lord ; and can rely on all
 To obey them to the letter——

NELLO. Good !

FLA. Save one—
 An' I might be so bold ?

NELLO. Well, speak, man, speak !

FLA. That Jacomo—he grows rebellious.

NELLO. He !

Nay, fear him not. A rough and gnarled bark,
 But honest at the core. The very love
 He bears the Lady Pia, she for him,
 Is voucher for his loyalty and truth.

I'll trust him. Now, away !

(*Exit FLAVIO. COUNT NELLO rises
and comes forward.*)

No, Flavio, no !

If I do set this guard upon my house,
It is not that I doubt my lady's faith.
I know her love as pure and free from taint,
As the white vestments of a saint in bliss.
It is myself, not her, that I distrust.
Churl that I am, I cannot spare one glance
Of the endearing kindness of her eyes ;
Forego one smile, or share the tones that come
Like a caress upon the wondering ear.
Oh, bane of love, that in its own excess
Is racked even by the charms on which it doats,
And dreads to lose what most it knows its own !
My own ! My own ! Dear words ! They haunt my
lips,
Yet still hang doubt and tremor at my heart.
How have I won her ? Are there no regrets,
No lookings back on happy days gone by,
No contrast of my harsh and wayward moods
With the smooth homage of some sprightlier tongue ?
Who's he she spoke of once, but would not name ?
Why does his shadow ever cross my thoughts ?
Why do I pry and peer in every face
That kindles—whose does not ?—beneath her glance,
To find if there a smouldering passion burns ?
Who loved her once, loves ever ! How, if she
Should nurse some lingering tenderness for him ?
I will not think it. Like an open book

She lays her heart before me. Mine it is,
 And I'll so fence and hedge it round with love,
 So interweave her being with my own,
 That, knowing thus my priceless gem secure,
 Covet who may, my heart shall be at peace.

(Goes up to window at back, and looks out.)

The moon already up! That's well! 'Twill lend
 Her light to speed me on my way to-night.
 There may be danger stirring. Well bethought!
 A score or so of spears were not amiss.
 Ho, Flavio! Tush, he must ere this be gone!
 Ottavio! No! I'll look to this myself. *(Exit.)*

As he goes off, enter on the other side JAC. His moody
 lordship gone! That's quite as well.
 To greet him ever goes against my grain.
 Now, there's a chance I may have speech, beside,
 With my dear lady mistress. Here she comes!

Enter PIA. *She does not at first observe* JACOMO. *Goes up to the table and raises the papers on which* COUNT NELLO *has been engaged.*

PIA. Not here? His message, too, so urgent! Strange!
 Some new disquietude! Ah, me! these wars
 Make cruel havoc of the life of home!
 These scrolls, in each I see fresh lines of care
 Upon my Nello's brow,—hours when his heart
 Is barred to me, and all that mine would speak.
 Hard! When a world of things are yet to say,
 Would draw our spirits closer, lift the cloud
 Of dark distrust, that sometimes veils his mind,

And bathe it in the sunshine of content !

(*Observes* JACOMO.)

Ah, Jacomo, good even ! Best of friends !

I feared you had forgot me.

JAC. (*presents her with flowers*). I ! Forget !

What has the old man to remember else,

But how to pleasure you ? 'Tis like old times

When I can see you smile.

PIA. The dear old times.

JAC. Ah, they were times indeed ! Dear heart ! I miss

The old faces sometimes, the old hearty ways,

The old kind voices !

PIA. 'Tis too hard a task

I've laid upon you, to attend me here,

Where all are strangers round you. You must leave me.

JAC. Strangers ! the greater need for me to stay.

Leave you ! While life is left me, leave you—never !

Heed not the old man's grumbling. I had news

From the old house, that set me longing.

PIA. News ?

What news ?

JAC. The young Count Guido has come back.

PIA. Guido ! My cousin Guido !

JAC. I so long

To see his bright and handsome face again,

His gallant air ! "To think I had some hand

"In training him into the man he is !

"She heeds me not. Dear lady ?"

PIA. Guido returned ?

JAC. I have a message for you from him (*looking round*). Ay,
 A letter! Here! (*Gives letter. She takes it, opens it hastily, and reads it.*)

(*Aside.*) Heaven send, Count Nello comes not!
 There's trouble in that letter! It was like!
 How pale she grows! Fool that I was to give it!
 (*Aloud.*) I trust this letter bears no evil news.

PIA. Oh, nothing, nothing. (*Aside.*) Oh, disastrous chance!

(*Aloud.*) How came you by this?

JAC. Scarce an hour ago,
 'Twas given me by Count Guido's equerry.

PIA. Sad! Sad!

JAC. She is deeply troubled. It were best
 I should be gone, before the Count returns.
 Lady, good night!

PIA (*abstractedly*). Good night, dear Jacomo!

JAC. There's mischief brooding. If Count Nello
 should!—

'Tis very like, he may, and then, Heaven knows,
 What might ensue. I'll be upon the watch. (*Exit.*)

PIA. He knew not of my marriage, then; and all
 The hopes whereon I had begun to build
 Were quicksands merely! (*Reads from letter.*)

'See you. From your lips,
 'Yours only, take the assurance of my doom,
 'And claim,—it is my right,—a last farewell!
 It must not be! I feel my every step
 Is marked and followed by no friendly eyes!
 And were Count Nello to encounter him,

'Twould fire the slumbering jealousy, that waits
But for a spark to kindle into flame,
How to be quenched appals me even to think !
No, if I've done my cousin Guido wrong,—
And yet I know not how—not on his head,
Nor yet on my dear lord's, that wronged him not,
The penalty must fall ! I hear his step.
He must not find me thus. This too ! Lie there !

(Places the letter in her bosom.)

So near my heart like treason seems to him
Who is its master ;—yet what refuge else ? *(Enter NELLO.)*
I came upon your bidding, dear my lord,
But you were gone, ere I——

NELLO. Your pardon, love !
I had to put some matters in despatch,
Of sudden urgency.

PIA. Is aught amiss ?
Ah, I can read new trouble in your eyes !

NELLO. No trouble, but my heart's impatience, sweet,
That I must leave you for some little space !
They summon me to conference at Florence.
I must away to-night.

PIA. How ! Go from me
Again so soon ?

NELLO. The sooner to return.
I will be back ere you have time to miss me.

PIA. Ah, Nello, no ! 'Tis very lonely here,
When you're away.

NELLO. Lonely ? You'd flatter me !

PIA. Why should you think I flatter ? Did I flatter,
When Nello sued, and Pia heard his suit,

When Nello vowed his absence from her side
But for one little hour was wretchedness,
And she believed him, happy in her faith?
" Say, was it flattery then, or the heart's voice,
" That recognised its mate, and said, I come?
" Then, dearest, can you think I should be aught
" But lonely, reft of that society,
" Which is my soul's sole comfort, and its joy?

NELLO. " The subtlest flattery of all is that
" Which makes the lover feel he is beloved,
" Yet not in words avows it." Oh, dear Pia,
You make even absence sweet to me, assured,
Your thoughts are with me still, as mine with you.
Yet why should you be sad, when I am gone.
Here be your flowers, your birds, your broidery,
Your poets and romancers; what need more
To make the hours run swiftly?

PIA. And you think
The heart demands no more?

NELLO. What would it have?

PIA. Freedom! Free air, free intercourse with those
It loves!

NELLO. It loves? A wife should have no love
But for her husband.

PIA. You would have me, then,
Forget my father, my dear aunt—the years,
When they were all in all to me?

NELLO. Not all.
There was another. I have not forgot
That pretty tale you told, yet told but half,
Hiding its hero. Freedom? Yes! Free speech,

Free intercourse with him ?

PIA. Oh, unworthy !
This is your guerdon for my maiden trust !
This your requital for the frankness, laid
Its heart's sole secret open to your hand !
I deemed you worthy of such confidence,
You teach me I was wrong.

NELLO. Why do you hide
His name from me ?

PIA. My secret has been told :
You have no right to his.

NELLO. You love him, Pia ?

PIA. If I had loved him, you had never owned
The right to question me. Go, sir ! You make
Your absence welcome.

NELLO (*kneeling*). Pardon, Pia, pardon !
Forget what I have said. My words were mad.
This once forgive. I live but on your love,
And grudge the very air, which fans your cheek,
The sweetness that it rifles. Mine, mine all,
I'd have you, heart, soul, sense. Your very dreams
Should all be mine. Your girlhood's memories
I would rase out, and all your life gone by,
That mingled not with mine. There should not live
The man could say, I knew this Pia once,
And from her smiles drew sunshine. Look on me !
Turn not in anger from me, or I die.

(*She turns towards him.*)

Oh, thanks ! And when this frenzy mads my brain,
I'll think of thee, as I behold thee now,
And be at peace. I must away awhile,

To see my force prepared. You pardon me?

PIA. I do. (*Exit NELLO.*) Ay, pardon, pity—you, myself,

For this offence but preludes many more,
To crave new pardon, putting to fresh strain
The chords of love should bind us each to each,
Till we shall wake some day and find them rent.
And this is man's devotion! Yielding us
Now homage as we were enshrined saints,
Anon arraigning us as blurred and foul
With falsehood most abhorred! And he could doubt
me—

Does doubt me now! Ay, though he stooped so low
For my forgiveness, he distrusts me still.
Yes, Pia, shrink not from the fatal truth.
His faith is gone—and, nurse it how you may,
That flower once snapped revives not evermore.

(GUIDO is seen to cross the balustrade of the balcony, and appears at the window.)

GUIDO. 'Tis she! Alone!

PIA (*seating herself on a couch*). How little dreamt
the bride,

Who entered here but three short months ago,
How close the clouds were gathering on the verge
Of her fair heaven of new-enkindled hopes!
But this is girlish weakness! Nello loves me.
And it may be his very love—perchance,
Some doubt, too, of his worthiness—excites
These jealous moods that change him to a thing
His better self despises. Shall I, then,
Not bear with them, till in my life he reads

Such confutation of his fears, shall make
His faith in me as absolute, as I
Am well assured his love is ?

GUIDO (*advancing*). Pia !

PIA. Ha,

Who spoke ?

GUIDO (*kneels to her*). One Guido whom you knew.

PIA. Great heavens !

How came you here ? What madness prompted you ?

GUIDO. Ay, call it madness ! I do think I'm mad.
Thought, reason, gone, oh, would that memory, too,
Were dead !—One burning impulse only left,
To find you, look upon your face once more,
And turn my heart to stone by gazing there !

PIA. And thus you seek me ? Oh, 'tis bravely done,
To steal thus on my privacy ! Away !
If you must seek me, seek me openly.
Each word you speak is outrage to myself,
And treason to my lord.

GUIDO. Treason to him !
If I have sought you thus, who made me ? He !
This lord, that holds you prisoned from all eyes,
Sets spies upon your motions, makes these walls
The barrier 'twixt yourself and all mankind——

PIA. Hold, sir !

GUIDO. Nay, thrusts your father from his gates——

PIA. Oh, calumny most foul !

GUIDO. Oh, truth most foul !
This very day he was denied admittance.

PIA. Oh no, 'tis false !

GUIDO. Then is your father false,

Whose cry of broken anguish echoes still
 Upon mine ears, lamenting for his child,
 Shut by a jealous tyrant from his arms.
 His lordship's lackeys spurned him from your gates,
 'Twas like, then, I should have his leave to come.
 I tarried not to ask it. He was gone
 From home, they said. I leapt the garden walls,
 And found my way here.

PIA. (*aside*). Shut my father from me!
 Is this his love for me? (*Aloud*.) You must away,
 He left me even now—should he return——

GUIDO. Let him return. I care not. He and I
 Have a dread reckoning to make together;
 It matters not how soon.

PIA. I will. You shall not stay.

GUIDO. Who shall prevent me?

PIA. I will. Are you a man
 Sworn by the sword you wear to do the right,
 To guard the weak from wrong, yet would compel
 A helpless woman to endure your presence,
 Taint her with holding secret conference,
 Blast her repute with foul surmise, and bring
 Disgrace upon the Tolommei's name?
 You linger still?

GUIDO. What message to your father?
 That you approve your lord's commands, content
 To sacrifice all other ties to him?

PIA. My father needs no message to assure him
 His daughter knows her duty, and will do it.
 Sir, you abuse his name to press me thus,
 And cloak the wilful madness brought you here!

Must I again command ?

GUIDO. I will be gone.

Thus meet we, and thus part. Thus is the star
I steered my course by, quenched. I had a dream
Of Paradise—I turned, and lo, the hand,
That held love's sparkling chalice to my lips,
Spurned me aside, and gave it to another.

PIA. Is this my cousin Guido ?

GUIDO. Oh, well feigned,—
Well as the love you cheated me withal,
When last we stood together !

PIA. Love ! Well feigned !

GUIDO. Oh, tell me you were ignorant I loved you,
Nor ever looked approval of my love ;
Say that I never vowed my heart to you,
Say that you never took the offering,
Say that our parting words, words burnt in flame
Upon my heart, were but an idler's dream,
Say anything to vindicate the wrong,
Has laid my soul in ruins !

PIA. Hear me, Guido.

I never loved you, save in such a sort
As sister may the brother of her youth.
So have I loved you ever. Never act
Of mine gave warrant of a different faith ;
Or if it did, at least I knew it not.

GUIDO. 'Twas nothing, then, to listen to my suit,
To send me forth, without one word to wake
A doubt of its acceptance, fired with hopes,
That were the very life-blood of my heart !

PIA. Alas, and was it thus, then, that you read

My silence in that hurried parting hour ?

'Twas all so strange, so sudden !

GUIDO.

Sudden ! Strange !

The voice of a life's devotion ! A true heart

Had found as sudden answer—truth for truth

At least had given ! A word had done't.

PIA.

Forgive me,

That I have wronged you thus unwittingly.

'Tis pain enough, that I have done you wrong ;

You must not hold me guilty of deceit.

Let the plain truth be still between us, Guido,

As it was ever in the olden days.

You never spoke to me of love but then,

And your words filled me with a strange surprise,

For I had dreamt not of the love they told,

Had you but stayed, I should have told you this——

GUIDO. Oh cursèd hour, that took me from Sienna !

PIA. When from that dream I woke, and found you
gone,

I feared, a false hope might have filled your heart ;

But your long silence lulled my fears, and I

Began to think, believe, that in the stir

Of other scenes, the wound, if wound it were,

Had found a balm, which left your heart unscarred.

GUIDO. Look on me now, and say, if love like mine

Is like to find a balm for hopes betrayed.

It was my life—fed every hope, thought, dream ;

The growth of years, its fibres in my heart,

'Tis rooted there, and there it needs must live,

Till that heart cease to beat. But you, so soon

You could forget me !

PIA. I did not forget.
Be just to me. You love,—know what love is,
And to that love you bear I make appeal.
Love comes,—how, when we know not,—does not lie
Within our wills, will not be bought by love.
The heart a wife should bring, I never could
Have brought to you. But what you ever were,
That you are now to me, and ever shall be,—
As dear to me, as may comport with due
Allegiance to my lord.

GUIDO. You love him, then?
I would believe it from your lips alone.
All's said! So ends the story of my love,
The glory of my life.

PIA. Oh, say not so!
Life is for other ends than but to love;
Nor always in fulfilment of its wish
Finds love content. Heaven sends its lessonings
To one through triumph, through failure to another,
Trial to all. 'Tis by the blows of fate
The spirit's strength is welded; only hearts
Of vulgar temper shiver 'neath their shock.
Say you have lost your love, all is not lost.
Shall you for this forego the noble strife
For honour, and the power to compass good
And glory for our country? No! In that
Brave strife forget the past—at least, its pain.
And if at times, perchance, its shadows rest
Too darkly on your path, think there is one,
Whose eye is on your progress,—one, whose heart
Will triumph in your triumph, proud to know,

That for her sake you wrestled with your grief,
And overthrew it.

GUIDO. My best teacher ever !
I will approve me worthy to have loved
A being all so noble. When you hear
Of me hereafter, you shall know it is
Your spirit lives within me. " Life has lost
" Not all its sweetness, while it offers still
" An aim so fair, a memory so endeared."
Forgive my hasty words ! Forgive this rash
Intrusion on your presence ! Now, adieu !
And Heaven rain all sweet blessings on your path,
And comfort you with sunshine to its close !

PIA. Adieu ! My loving greeting to my father !
Assure him I am well, and well at ease.
You'll be a son to him ?

GUIDO. Be sure I will.
He shall not lack an arm to help or guide,
While Guido lives. Adieu !

PIA. Heaven's peace go with you !

*(As GUIDO is retiring across the balcony, enter
NELLO, who hears the last words. PIA
turns, and observing NELLO, starts, but
immediately recovers her composure, while
he rushes forward and seizing her by the
wrist points to the window.)*

NELLO. This is the freedom that you pine for ! This
Your heart's free intercourse with those it loves !

ACT III.

A hall in a château. Door in centre. An apartment opens out on left; on the right, a window, barricaded with iron stanchions. A Gothic couch with a table.

COUNT NELLO (*discovered seated, with a book in his hand*). I'll read no more. Some fascination draws

Me ever back to this accursèd book.

"What wretch was he who gave his nights and days

"To wring from nature all her secret banes,

"Compound and label them, like vulgar wares,

"And make a ghastly merchandise of death?"

What I would have this shows me how to gain:

But oh, not thus, not thus!

(*Rises; looks restlessly towards the door on the left.*)

What keeps this monk

So long within her chamber? Does she trust

Him with the secret she withholds from me,

And make to him confession of the love

Which bars me from the portals of her heart?

"Oh, how I loved this woman! Loved? Love still!

"To know her soul mine, as her hand is, were

"Supremest bliss." But this can never be.
 Yet, if not mine, no other man shall boast,
 He won the prize I wrestled for in vain.
 Death only shall dispute my bride with me,
 And him will I encounter by her side,
 And give him welcome, come how soon he may!

(The PRIOR enters from the chamber of the COUNTESS.)

At last he comes. Good even, holy father!
 How fares it with my gentle lady, pray?

"Men laud your cunning in the leech's craft,

"Not less than they extol your piety.

"I look that she may profit much by both."

What of her malady? Not grave, I trust?

How's this? You do not answer—and that look?

PRIOR. You've sought my aid, sir, somewhat tardily.

NELLO. How! Tardily? "What means this freezing
 tone?

"Speak! Tell me all!" What fear is in your thoughts?

Within the last few days her eyes have gained

All their old lustre, and her cheek its bloom;

"Smiles sat upon her lips, her tones were glad,

"And health seemed living in her frame anew."

What blight has come to change all in an hour?

PRIOR. Trust not, my lord, this fleeting gleam. Our
 art

Warns us to dread it as a fatal sign.

Even death at times puts on a masking guise.

NELLO. Death! And no remedy?

PRIOR.

But one.

NELLO.

"Say on—

"What must be done?"

PRIOR. Remove her hence at once
From the Maremma's pestilential air !
To-morrow—nay, to-night, this very hour,
If it be not even now, perchance, too late !

NELLO. "Nay, nay, you must mistake. It cannot be!
"So soon to suffer——

PRIOR. "I do not mistake."

NELLO. I am to blame. "Intent upon the cares
"Of patching up old flaws, adjusting feuds,
"Stopping the breaches of ungainful waste,
"Which long neglect and absence had engendered
"In my domains in the Maremma here,"
I had forgot the dangers of the climate.
We shall depart to-morrow. Yet, now I think—
Not that I would make question of your skill,—
You, father, though a stranger—from the north,
'Tis said—have sojourned here some twenty years,
Defying death, yet daily fronting it ;
How comes it, then, this malady, I pray,
Is so capricious, working, as 'twould seem,
In six short months, more mischief on my wife,
Than on yourself in twenty years? Go to !
'Tis something else——

PRIOR. 'Tis nothing else ! The air
Of the Maremma blights more certainly,
That she is pining with an untold grief ;
The heart's home-sickness,—“a consuming bane,
“That fires the eye with an unnatural light,
“Puts a wan wistfulness into the smile,
“Brings old familiar haunts and faces back
“In the brief radiance of a feverish dream,

"Straight to be quenched in tears—a bane, my lord,
 "That o'er a sick mind throws a deadlier gloom."

Such is the malady, my lord, that now
 Consumes the sources of your lady's life,
 But which may be arrested by a prompt
 Removal hence—by company—by change——

NELLO. Nay, sir, proceed! And by a lover——

PRIOR.

Count!

NELLO. Oh, holy father, you mistake my thought.
 Heaven knows, though bowed, ay, to the dust with grief,
 Tortured with jealousy, I hold my wife
 Worthy of boundless honour and regard.
 But did a husband's love suffice her heart,
 Would she so droop and fade for weariness?
 "Some far-off image—memory, perchance,—
 "We are not always masters of our dreams."
 Here you are in the dark as much as I.
 She is not like to trust her confessor
 With what she dares not whisper to herself.
 "In such case silence is no sacrilege."

PRIOR (*indignantly*). My lord, my lord, you shall not
 snare me thus.

NELLO. "A most convenient weariness is this!

"Who ever died of weariness? No, no!" (*Rises.*)

PRIOR (*aside*). Great heaven, forgive me my suspicious
 thoughts!

(*To* COUNT NELLO.) My lord, 'tis fit that I be frank
 with you.

For some time past a rumour has been rife,
 Which centres darkly on yourself. 'Tis said,
 That goaded on by jealousy to seek

A vengeance dark, deliberate, and sure,
You wittingly expose your innocent wife
To this miasmal atmosphere of death.

NELLO. What matters it to me what babblers say?
If there be danger, they must see I share it.
“ This atmosphere, that shrivels up the lips,
“ Has breathed on mine ;—this fever of the blood,
“ This languor of the soul, I too partake.”

PRIOR. Think you I know it not? Have I not read
In your wild eye the traces of your pangs?
Seen that a kindred fire consumes you, too,
And that, if death shall bear your lady hence,
You will go down with her into the grave?
This is your purpose—your desire, your hope.

NELLO. No more—no more! We shall depart to-night.

PRIOR. Yes; save her, oh my son! She is most pure,
Loyal and loving,—such an one, as heaven
Gives to a man, when it would bless him most,
But, if untreasured, swiftly takes away.
“ Sienna, when you wedded her, foretold
“ A happy issue to the feuds that long
“ Had ranged your sires in sanguinary strife.
“ Blight not this golden promise. Watch yourself;
“ Distrust the blood that courses in your veins.
“ ’Tis there, and not in her the mischief lies ;”
No angel in yon heaven, where all is pure,
Is freer from the taint of aught should wake
The jealousy which gnaws you. Yes, my son,
Doubt her no more, and all may yet be well. (*Exit.*)

NELLO (*alone*). How cheaply may an angel’s name be
bought!

"An air of meek contrition, folded hands,
"Some penitential words—the thing is done!
"Oh, this repentance may find grace above,
"But not with frail humanity like mine."
I must have vengeance on this cruel girl,
Whom they call angel. She can see me suffer,
Can see me dying, yea, will die herself
Far rather than divulge her lover's name.
"Ah, would I ne'er had known her—ne'er been born!
"Fain would I die alone, no crime but one
"Upon my soul; but some fiend urges me
"To drag her down with me into the grave.
"Still is the image present to my thoughts
"Of one that dries her hypocritic tears,
"Rich with my treasure, with my jewel blest—
"Oh cruel Pia! How I love her still!
"A word would save her. Why conceal this name?"
That mystery broke, I would forgive her all,
Spare her, and die content, but to have seen
My rival for one moment face to face.
But yield her up to one, who now, perchance,
Even now, stalks like a phantom round these walls,
To pounce upon my wealth! Oh hell, to die
Ere our good swords have crossed! Bear witness, heaven,
'Tis he that tortures her—'tis he that kills,
'Tis he has roused this hell within my soul!

(A trumpet heard without.)

A trumpet!

(Goes to window.)

How! A horse, all white with foam!
The rider wears the Tolommei's garb.
"He bears a letter." They have tracked us, then.

Ha ! Jacomo ! 'Tis he has given the clue !
He foiled me once, but shall not so again.

*(Enter FLAVIO with a letter, which he
delivers to COUNT NELLO.)*

'Tis even as I surmised. Her father's hand !

(Reads the letter, then turns to FLAVIO.)

The messenger saw no one ? Talked with none ?

FLA. No one, my lord.

NELLO. 'Tis well. Give order straight,
Admittance to the castle be denied
These next two days to all who may appear.

Away ! *(Exit FLAVIO.)*

Her father to be here to-morrow !

Well ! Let him come ! To-morrow ? Ay, to-day !

(Sits down and resumes the book.)

Come, trusty counsellor, advise me now.

" Let me peruse the place again. Ha ! Good !

" 'Tis here ! " *(Reads.)* ' The elixir of the Magian kings,

A subtle poison, of exceeding power,

Exhales a fragrance pleasant to the sense,

And works a gentle, easy, painless death.'

Good, I would have it so ! ' If smelt to only,

Slowly it works, but still with certainty ;'

" Oh, excellent device of science, thus

" To deaden pain, delighting while it kills !

" Here is the poison, then, which freezes up

" The blood, yet pains not,—leaves no trace behind."

Its action may be counteracted, too,

Should she relent, or I repent me. Here

I hold the antidote, in case of need.

Once more I'll see her ; and this time, belike,

I may learn all, without these desperate means.
 "Oh, may she speak that word, and from herself
 "Avert the peril to my rival's head!
 "Grant, oh ye heavens! he fall into my hands,
 "That she may live!" But let me forth awhile,
 To cool the fever of my brain, and still
 The raging pulses of my tortured heart,
 Before I seek this final interview.

(As he turns to go out, he is met by NINA, who enters with a bouquet in her hand, and starts back, alarmed, on seeing him.)

Ha, Nina, still with the accustomed gift!

NINA *(with embarrassment)*. My lord!

NELLO *(taking the bouquet)*. What brilliancy! what charming tints!

They grow choice flowers in the Maremma, girl!

NINA. Sir, my betrothed——

NELLO. Ha, Beppo? A good youth.

NINA. Oh no!

NELLO. Luigi?

NINA. No, sir.

NELLO. How, another?

His name is—Ah, well, well, I see you blush.

But, Nina, have a care. Not yet sixteen,

And with a secret! *(Aside.)* Heavens! What fire is here!

(Aloud.) When girls are silent, 'tis because they love.

(Aside, and crossing to the left.)

This lily never bloomed in the Maremma,

These flowers were by no rustic's hand arranged.

Perhaps they hide some letter? No! Yet stay.

Have I not somewhere heard, that in the East

Flowers are disposed, by rules well understood,
To bear the secret messages of love?
I charge these flowers with mine.

(Empties the contents of a phial on the bouquet.)

NINA. Heavens, what a look!

I pray you, let me have my flowers, my lord!

NELLO. I never saw more beautiful.

NINA. Indeed

I had to travel for them many a mile.

You are not angry, sir?

NELLO. Angry? Oh no.

At such sweet thoughtfulness how could I be?

Take back your flowers.

NINA. Oh, thanks!

(She is about to smell to them when COUNT

NELLO snatches them from her.)

NELLO. On second thoughts,

I will myself present them to the Countess.

Go, child, and say that I await her here.

NINA. Oh, thanks, my lord, this is so kind of you!

(Exit.)

NELLO *(alone)*. "They are all leagued against me.

Yes, not one

"Can I find open to assault, not one.

"Why, even this girl, I've had her dogged in vain.

"There is a general compact to betray me.

"So near the goal, I feel my purpose fail."

(Looking at the bouquet.)

Poor flowers! The tears lie heavy on your leaves.

Weep on, weep on, for ye are brimmed with death.

No, let her live! I will destroy them. Yet

Perchance they are a present from his hand,
Perchance he culled them for her yesterday.
And though he did, what matter? Such a doom
Were much too cruel. Let me hence!

FLA. (*appearing at centre door*). Are you
Alone, my lord?

NELLO. Speak low!

FLA. (*advancing*). One of our people
Has just come in, who tells me that he saw
Near Civitella, at the break of day,
A troop of cavaliers, all armed, upon
The march to this chateau.

NELLO (*aside*). Ha, is it so?
Her father here already!

FLA. Striking off
By a cross path, he distanced them an hour
Or more.

NELLO. 'Tis well! An hour? That will suffice.

FLA. One word, my lord! One of the party sent
A bunch of flowers by Nina, who, no doubt,
Expected them.

NELLO. Ha, flowers? (*Aside.*) 'Tis he, 'tis he!
Father and lover both arrayed against me.

(To FLAVIO.) Go find this man, and bid him wait
for me. (*Exit FLAVIO.*)

And so, Count Tolommei, you would fain
Surprise us; but you'll find us on the watch.
Now to prepare to give you fitting welcome!

(*Places the bouquet on the table, and
exit through door in centre.*)



Enter NINA and PIA.

NINA. How! no one here? Gone! and my flowers?
Oh shame!

PIA. Nina, you must not blame my gracious lord.
Seeing me suffer, girl, he suffers too,
And he has much beside to task his thoughts.
This makes him wayward,—moody.

NINA. For all that,
I can't see why he should be so with you,
So good, so kind! 'Tis not for me to speak;
But if he loved you truly, he would be
More thoughtful for you, would not keep you here
In this dull place, that's plainly killing you,
And for no reason else, that I can see,
Except to have you wholly to himself,
To torture with his whims and moody fits.

PIA. Hush, Nina, you forget yourself. I know,
'Tis not without a cause, he is so changed;
But while his love's unchanged, I am content.

NINA. "His love! Content! The peevish boy,
whose bird,
"Caged from the sunshine and the rushing breeze,
"Droops plume by plume, and frets, until its song
"Dies down into a broken fitful wail,
"Will say he loves his bird, would break his heart
"To think of losing it, but not the less
"One day no flutter answers to his call,
"And on its withered turf the bird lies dead.

PIA. "Hush! Hush!" My pain is somewhat less
to-day;

I do not seem to need your arm's support.
 My spirits are more cheerful, and I long
 To look upon the sky. (*Approaches the window.*)

How beautiful !

Ye spreading pines, ye old primeval oaks,
 And thou, calm lake, the mirror of the sky,
 How fair ye are ! What fragrance from the earth
 Exhales as from an altar heaped with flowers !
 And yonder sea, that stretches far away,
 Its deep blue fading in a silver line !
 I love and bless thee, thou fair Tuscan land.
 And yet, and yet, another place it is
 To which I fain had spoke my last farewell.
 Hear me, kind heaven, show it these eyes once
 more,

That so my sunset may reflect my dawn ;
 Though but a moment, grant me yet to see
 My own sweet native soil ! My prayer is heard !
 Is this the murmur of my childhood's stream,
 Laving the long hair of the willows ? Hush !
 My garden's balmy breath salutes my cheek !
 Yes, yes, it is no dream ! What joy to tread
 This velvet sward again ! Who spoke of dying ?

NINA. Oh, my poor mistress !

PIA.

Castle of my sires,

Grand even in ruin ! War has scathed thy front,
 And o'er the scars of thy proud battlements
 The ivy and the jasmine thickly creep.
 See, Nina, see the white swans in the fosse,
 The towers reflected in the trembling waves,
 And yon old man ! It is my father ! Hark,



He calls me! Yes! I come. Who dares restrain me?
Know you it is my father? Let me go!

My father! Ah, these bars! Where am I, then?

What dream was this? Ah me, death comes so slowly!

(NINA assists her to the couch.)

What have I said? Nay, child, dry up your tears!

NINA (*observing the bouquet on the table*). No, let me weep! But look, here are my flowers!

PIA (*taking the bouquet in her hand*). See how unjust you were! 'Tis plain he left

Your gift for me, and will no doubt return.

But tell me, child, how came you by these flowers?

How's this! You hesitate?

NINA. I was forbid—

But what of that? What is there to conceal?

One day, as I was walking by myself

Down by the river, on the opposite bank

I spied a flower so lovely, I resolved

To have it; so I bared my feet, and stepped

Into the stream, and having plucked the flower,

Had reached the bank, when all at once a man

Sprang from the thicket and stood full before me.

PIA. A robber?

NINA. No, a youth of noble air,
Who bore a hooded falcon on his wrist.

PIA. Proceed.

NINA. For whom these flowers? he said. I answered,

Sir, for my mistress! Do you serve, said he,

The noble lady, whom her lord, they say——?

But 'tis no matter what he said.

PIA.

He said?

NINA. What we all see and know, alas! too well.
He'd give his life, he said, could he but bring
The flush of health into your cheek, and make you
The bright and happy thing you were of yore,—
That something must be done to set you free,
That something should be done, and quickly, too,
And asked a thousand questions with an air
So tender!——

PIA.

You replied? You stayed to hear?

NINA. How could I else? He spoke to me of you,
And my heart warmed to every word he said.
Besides, he had my slippers in his hand,
Which I had taken off to cross the stream.
You smile—but could I go with feet all bare?
Well, in a word, he would not let me part
Till I had promised him to come again,
To meet him there the Tuesday afterward.

PIA. Ah, foolish girl! That is to-day.

NINA.

It is.

PIA. You will not go?

NINA.

I have but just returned.

He met me,—but to-day, armed head to foot.
The hour approached for your release, he said,
Again he pressed me close about your health,
And gave this nosegay to me. How, my lady,
Do you reject it?

PIA. (*aside, and turning away*). Oh! alas, alas!

NINA. The very thing he dreaded. Should their
beauty

Surprise your mistress, were his very words,



And she suspects you, not a word of me,
Nor what I've said to you, but tell her this,
And then she scarcely will refuse the gift,
These flowers, the present of no stranger's hand,
Bloomed in her father's gardens yester morn.

PIA. My father's, do you say? Oh blessèd gift!
I may then press them freely to my heart,
Inhale, without a blush, their sweet perfume!
My father's gardens! "Oh, my soul revives!
"These lovely flowers!" Remember, if I die,
That I would have them near me in the tomb.
Look at this golden broom, this dazzling rose!
"Heaven has sown beauty wide through every land,
"But underneath no other skies, methinks,
"Shall one behold such gardens, flowers so fair,
"As those that bloom around my father's halls."
This smilax must have drunk my own dear stream.
"They used to praise its dark enamelled tints
"Against my cheek, its coral tendrils twined
"Among my dusky tresses. Put it on.

NINA. "No, place it on a brow more fit to wear
it."

PIA (*while NINA is engaged in adjusting the flowers
in her hair*). Would you believe, my girl, that
far, far hence,
Hearts have been found,—thank heaven! not often
found,—
Corrupted so by the polluting air
And dreary life of cities—men so vile,
And sometimes women, too, alas!—who've mixed
Poison with the pure perfume of a flower!

NINA (*aside*). Poison! Great heaven! This deadly paleness—

(*Snatches the nosegay from the hand of PIA.*

COUNT NELLO, *who has entered a short time before, advances and takes it from her.*)

Ah!

NELLO. What is the matter, Nina?

(*Smells to the bouquet.*)

I rejoice

To find you stirring, madam. (*To NINA.*) You may go I would be private with your mistress here.

(*Exit NINA.*)

(NELLO *restores the bouquet to PIA, who throws it hastily down upon the table.*)

It is enough my hand has touched the flowers,
To make you cast them from you with disdain.
Your pardon.

PIA. Ever this sarcastic tone?

“You do me wrong, my lord, most heavy wrong.”

What are the flowers to me, when you are by?

Your eyes with sorrow wan are all I see,

In them I read the pangs that rack your heart,

Seek in them, oh in vain! some glimpse of joy.

Ah, to rekindle that—one gleam, but one—

Chase with my words the trouble from your brow,

Calm for one day the fever of your brain,

I'd give my life—alas! I would, I would.

NELLO. Madam, I doubt it not. Death is your hope.

'Twill rid you of a bondage you detest.

And so the tomb for you is but a bed,

Fragrant with flowers, and wooing, where you yearn

To sink into a long luxurious sleep.



PIA. Ah no, my lord. Life, even when bitterest, is
A tyrant whom we love, although he wounds.
Oh, with what rapture would I cling to it,
If in your eyes I saw the old fond smile,
If trusted, loved, as once, my days rolled on
Betwixt my father and yourself in peace.
Think you, for aught beyond the sphere of time
I'd barter such dear certainty of bliss.
Speak but the wish, I am ready to live on.

NELLO. Oh say, resigned to bear a life you loathe !
No, Pia, no, you die without regret,
Clasping your secret to your heart—cold, calm,
Too proud to sully my name or your own,
But all too full of his, for mine to find
The sorriest corner there ! What is the world,
What sunshine or our weary life to you ?
You look to find a better world beyond,
A world where souls that love shall meet once
more,—

Oh, I am jealous of the heavens themselves !—
A world where I shall never meet you, for
Within its limits I may never come !

PIA (*rising*). You fright me, Nello. What wild words
are these ?

NELLO. So death but part us, you will smile on death.
(*Sits down.*)

PIA (*going up to him*). Nello, this frenzy drives me to
despair.

Come forth from these black labyrinths of doubt,
Rend from your eyes this curtain of thick night,
And recognise your wife for what she is.

NELLO. No more, no more!
 “(Aside.) Oh, how her words confound me! Who,
 to hear,
 “To see her, but must deem her pure from guile?”
 (Aloud.) And so my cruelty, my fell designs,
 Might in your pity be redeemed at last?
 Oh, could I hope for that!

PIA. I see your thought.
 "That this should be, to you seems hopeless, wild ;
 "'Tis hard, I own, yet not impossible.
 "For one who bears a noble knightly name
 "To hide him in a pestilential waste,
 "To kill a wife there, is an act abhorred,
 "And marked for infamy by all mankind :

" Yet on this victim of a jealous rage,
" His victim with a gentler eye can look.
" Passion so erring, such dark frenzied thoughts
" Deserve her pity, who hath caused them all ;
" And when this man, blameless till then, and brave,
" Who, if he fell, fell by his love o'erthrown,
" Led back by love, regains his former self,
" Stoops for forgiveness, begs to be beloved,
" Then——"

NELLO. Then ?

PIA. Oh then, far, far from all can
 wake

Remembrance of that dark unhappy time,
For these twin hearts are blessings yet in store.

NELLO. " And in this pilgrimage you'd follow me ?

PIA. " I would !

NELLO. " You could find courage for the
 task ! "

But he, this lover—he, who masked in night
Held parley with you at your balcony,
He, whom your silence shields from my revenge,
Shall he, I pray thee, bear us company ?

*(PIA covers her face with her hands ; the COUNT
continues pacing up and down the chamber
as he speaks.)*

This phantom who makes havoc of my sleep,
This man, whose hand, perchance, I've clasped in mine,
This mask, that vanished in the shapeless night,
But left a stinging whisper in mine ear,
Which murmurs evermore, ' She loves thee not ! '

PIA. Nello !

NELLO. Who at this very hour, belike,
Boasts of his triumph 'mongst his wassail friends,
And pledging my dishonour in his cups,
Completes the revel with his mistress's name !

PIA. Nello ! *(Falls fainting at his feet.)*

NELLO. Good heavens ! What have I done ?
(Raises her and places her on the couch.)

PIA. Fear not.

I am dying, Nello ; this blow is the last.
Yet is there something I would say before
I die ; heaven knows it is the very truth.
That fatal interview——

NELLO. Ay, what of that ?

PIA. It was not of my seeking—with my will
Should ne'er have been, nor know I how he found
His way that night to me, upon whose heart
He dreamed,—why dreamed, it recks not now to think,—
He held some claim, which in his absence had
Been thrust aside too roughly.

NELLO. Then it was——

PIA. The object of that love of early years,
Whose story I have told you. It was rash,
Wilful, unjust to me, to seek me so ;
Yet, knowing all, I can forgive the mood,
Which yearned to wrest assurance from myself,
That with my hand I gave my heart to you,
That though the act, which made me yours, had made
Division of our paths for evermore,
He still might live in my regard, might claim
A sentence not ungentle from my lips,
A farewell not unkind—the heart needs such !

NELLO. Sentence? Farewell? What proof have I
of that?

PIA. The oath I swear in this my dying hour,
These lonely walls, these iron bars, yourself!

NELLO. What surety have I in these iron bars?
Can love not force them in a thousand ways?
Lacks he a messenger—a bird will serve,
An arrow, or a nosegay waft his tale.

PIA. I understand your meaning. Be it so!
I'll not defend myself. Yet one word more!
Look in my face; then say, if you read there
The traces of disloyalty and shame!

NELLO. No, no, guilt never spoke in tones like these.
I feel your words are true. That look, that voice,
Suspicion cannot live within their sphere.
Oh, Pia, to forget, and be once more
The same as in the days, when this wild heart
Drew charmed life from every word of thine;
When all its golden dreams came rushing back
At one sweet gleam of kindness in your eyes!
Then at your feet I was content to live,
Or die—I cared not, if 'twere pity, duty—
You loved me, Pia—loved, and I was happy.
My watchful tenderness had won your soul,
When this man came——

PIA. He could not alter me.

NELLO. Then, wherefore do you countenance his suit?
Emboldened by your silence he hopes on,
Believes you love him——

PIA. As a sister might.
Did I not know he holds your honour dear,

Dear as my own, I should abhor the man
I now, perforce, must pity and respect.

NELLO. By heavens, I long to see him more and
more !

But this true squire, this brother, this tame slave
Of duty, has made shipwreck of my life,
To black perdition hurled my soul, and I
Will not believe you, madam, till your lips
Reveal the caitiff's name. Your life and mine
Depend upon that word. Do you consent ?

PIA. No !

NELLO. If I vowed I should forget this name,
That undivulged thus tortures me, or, say
Oblivion were impossible, should swear
To crush all thoughts of vengeance in my heart ?

PIA. Still would I not. That name, my lord, my
tongue

Shall never speak. Revenge, with all your race,
Is native in the blood, and, though you swore
By every holiest vow, a day would come,
When words, oaths, all would fail to curb your hand.

NELLO. " Ah, how you love this man !

PIA. " Love ? Love ? I would
" Save both from crime.

NELLO. " And make a double victim.

PIA. " Would I might fall the only sacrifice,
" And by my death redeem another's life !

NELLO. " And whose that other's ? His alone, ay, his !"
Mock me no more ! I read it in your soul,
'Tis some base churl you shroud up from my wrath :
Shame, and not love, puts gyves upon your tongue ;



Shame to have stooped to a debasing choice.

My rival's name——

PIA. Is peer, sir, to your own,
And were my life now to begin anew,
I would desire no better, nobler name ;
For he that bears it bears a soul as high
As his proud titles, and a heart as pure.
Brave, but the terror of his foes alone,
Respecting my position, sir, and yours,
Bearing his sorrow meekly, he would ne'er,
Like a foul spider, have enmeshed his prey
Within his coils in loathsome nook obscure,
To gnaw it slowly, surely, noiselessly.
Lover or spouse, if love had warped his brain
To murderous thoughts against his mistress, he
Had slain her by one open blow, not slunk
Accomplice of the vaporous pestilence !

NELLO. My wrath shall make thee tremble !

PIA. Tremble? I,
A daughter of the Tolommei? Oft
Our ancestors have met in battle gripe ;
When did they quail before each other's frown ?
Their sinews, sir, are yours—their heart is mine !
Slay, but no outrage ! Take such vengeance as
Befits your lineage. My life is yours,
To expiate my fault. Let that suffice !
Urge me no more ; I bear unto my grave
That name, nor you, nor any one shall know.

NELLO. Defend your lover, madam, to my shame !

PIA. Count della Pietra, I defend your wife ;
Against yourself defend your honour—mine.

But I am weak, ill, suffering, most unfit
 Longer to urge a parley, which but serves
 To quicken wounds that rankle. What, beside,
 Would it avail me? The disguise is dropped,
 And the conditions of the bargain clear :
 Die, or denounce the object of your hate !
 My choice is made. Death ! Let him take his prey.

NELLO. False to the last ! I looked for nothing less.
 Madam, but one word more, and I have done.
 Your father——

PIA. My father !——

NELLO. Instigated by
 The slanders of that traitor, Jacomo——

PIA. Is coming ?

NELLO. Ay, to-day.

PIA. My father ! I
 Shall see him——

NELLO. See, I hold his letter here.

PIA. Oh, thanks, kind heaven ! Then all may yet be
 well.

NELLO. Within an hour your father should be here.
 But mark me, madam, as my foe he comes.
 You shall not see him.

PIA. How ! Not see him ! Who
 Shall step between the father and his child ?

NELLO. Death, that even now sits darkly in your eyes.

PIA. Who told you what my sufferings are ?

NELLO. My heart,
 That shares them—my blood, iced in my veins like
 yours,
 By the same poison !

PIA. Whose hand gave it?

NELLO. Mine!

Mine, in these flowers my hate suspected.

PIA. How!

These flowers. Just Heaven! And is it thus I die?

Alas! 'Tis death indeed. When hope had dawned—
My father——

NELLO. Listen! You may see him still—
You still may live to nurse his failing years.

PIA. Ah, you deceived me, then?

NELLO. No, madam! But
The hand that dealt the wound can heal it too:
This perfume (*holding out a phial*)——

PIA. Give it me!

NELLO (*music heard without*). Hark, hark! that
air,

The Tolommei's March! Live for your father! Live!

PIA. The air I loved.

O yes! I would live still! Give me!

(*Grasps the phial, and is about to smell to it.*)

NELLO. His name?

PIA (*pushes away the phial*). Never! (*Dies.*)

NELLO (*drawing his sword*). Dead with her secret!
Dead! My vengeance foiled!

Ho, Flavio!

FLA. (*enters hastily*). My lord, your people have
thrown down their arms.

Count Tolommei——

NELLO. Admit him! Let him come;
He'll find his daughter with her bridegroom here!
(*TOLOMMEI and GUIDO rush in.*)

TOL. Thou ravening hell-kite, give me back my child !
 NELLO (*pointing to PIA*). Go, claim her for thy bidding ! There she lies !

TOL. (*rushes forward, and raises her from the couch*).

Oh, murderous hypocrite ! Too late, too late !

GUIDO. Pia ! My love ! My Pia !

NELLO. Thine ! Ha ! then

At length I meet my rival front to front !

Look to thyself ! She loved thee, and 'tis meet,

That with thy blood her bier should be baptised.

GUIDO. Loved me ? No, fiend, she loved but thee
 alone !

And thus thou hast repaid her ! Oh, my soul's bride,
 I live but to avenge thee.

(*They fight. After a few passes*

NELLO *drops his sword.*)

NELLO.

Hold ! My brain

Is dizzy—my arm withers ! See, see there !

Pia ! She looks at me ! No light, no smile !

All dark—dark !

(*Dies.*)

Tableau. Curtain falls.

KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER

A DANISH LYRICAL DRAMA

BY

HENRIK HERTZ

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

KING RENÉ of Provence.

IOLANTHE, his Daughter.

COUNT TRISTAN of Vaudemont.

SIR GEOFFREY of Orange.

SIR ALMERIK.

EBN JAHIA, a Moorish Physician.

BERTRAND.

MARTHA, his Wife.

The scene lies in Provence, in a valley of Vaucluse, and lasts from mid-day to sunset. Time—the middle of the 15th century.

KING RENÉ'S DAUGHTER.

To the left (of the actor) stands a house of one storey, covered with ivy and roses,—its windows shaded by verandahs. A garden runs backwards from the house, in which the vegetation displays a tropical luxuriance. Some date-palms in the foreground. At the end of the garden is seen a wall of rock, overgrown with brushwood, and in it a door so covered with moss and creepers, that it is only perceptible when open. Behind this wall lofty mountains stretch into the distance.

SCENE I.

BERTRAND. *Immediately afterwards,* SIR ALMERIK.

Then MARTHA.

BERT. (*entering from the house*). It was the bell!
Some message from the king!

(*Crosses the stage to the rock, and opens the concealed door. Returns immediately with SIR ALMERIK, but keeps him standing at the entrance.*)

Sir Almerik! You here! Stand back! Nay, not a step!
No stranger enters here.

AL.

I must and will.

BERT. No, not a foot, by heavens! You have deceived me.

Hearing the bell, and with it, too, the sign,
I felt assured that it must be Raoul.

AL. The king has sent me hither in his stead.
See here this letter, and his royal ring.

BERT. His ring? 'Tis so. A letter! By your leave?
(*Reads.*)

"Frankly confide in Almerik, and give him
Whatever information he desires."

—This changes matters quite. Frown not, my lord,
For if you know the secret of this place,
Then you must know that prudence is my duty.

AL. (*advancing with BERTRAND to the front of the stage*). I know the place's secret? Save the mark!
I find myself here to my own surprise,
And all I see augments my wonderment.
A very paradise amid the waste!
Read me this mystery.

BERT. How! from the king
Did you not learn it?

AL. Nay, not I!

BERT. So, so!
If he was silent, I must needs be dumb.

AL. Nay, friend, you jest!

BERT. I never jested less.

MAR. (*appearing at the door of the house*). Sir Almerik?

BERT. He brings King René's ring,
And knows the sign to gain admittance here.
But nothing more. He must at once begone.

AL. Begone, when the king sends me ?

BERT. Ay, although he did.

MAR. Stay, Bertrand, stay ! (*To ALMERIK.*) What
is your message, sir ?

AL. I was to say, that in an hour the king
Would come with his physician, Ebn Jahia.

MAR. The very famous Moor, I know him well——

AL. Comes with the king, and you were to make
sure——

These were his words—that all things were prepared
As the leech ordered you.

BERT. 'Tis well, 'tis well !

The king may trust to us. Some hours ago
Was Ebn Jahia here.

MAR. And yet, Sir Knight,
His Majesty imparted nothing more ?

AL. He was in haste, and full, meseemed, of thought.
The Moor, this Ebn Jahia, had arrived,
Raoul was ill, and secretly the king
Called me aside. "I can depend on you,"
He said, "and in your secrecy confide !
Follow the messenger, who will conduct you,
And then fulfil your charge."

MAR. And this was all
Was told you by the king ?

AL. Not all, and yet
What more he spake was wrapped in mystery.
He mused awhile, then, hesitating, said,
"Look you ; I count on your fidelity ;
You'll find my daughter, where you are to go."
Then all at once he suddenly broke off,

Penned in keen haste the letter which I brought,
And bade me go.

MAR. The letter?

BERT. Ah, yes! The letter!

MAR. (*takes and reads the letter*). 'Tis the king's hand.
How can you doubt his tale?

BERT. No, you are right, I had forgot the letter.

AL. Then by the letter you may gather, how
The king desires, that from your lips I learn
What things soe'er 'tis needful I should know.
Who is this daughter that he told me of?
Margaret is now in Britain, and Iolanthe——

MAR. Is here.

AL. Here? Iolanthe is in Spain,
Reared in a convent since her infancy.

MAR. Not so, Sir Knight; she's here, and has been
ever.

AL. How! Here? I prithee, Bertrand, tell me all!

BERT. You oft, no doubt, have heard of the dispute
About Lorraine, that raged so long between
Our king and Vaudemont.

AL. I know it well.
Yet is that ancient quarrel now forgot.
The terms of peace, by Burgundy arranged,
Secure—as rumour gives the story out—
King René's daughter's hand in marriage to
The son of Count Antonio Vaudemont.
This daughter, Iolanthe, was a child
When this alliance was determined on.

BERT. 'Twas even as you say; but, good Sir Knight,
The compact scarce was settled, when by fire

The palace was consumed at dead of night,
And Iolanthe—then a one year's babe—
Had all but perished in the flames. To save
Her life one course, and one alone, was left ;
We from the chamber window let her down,
And caught her safe on cushions as she fell.
Yet, or through fear or injury from the fall,
Suffice to say, the child had lost her sight.

AL. Had lost her sight ?

MAR. Ay, even so, my lord.

Imagine our distress—her sire's despair.
Alas ! a child so gentle and so sweet,
And of her sight bereft—how sad, how hard !
The hope, that with her life was intertwined,
Extinguished, and the old and bitter feud
About Lorraine renewed—ay, and renewed
Too sure, alas ! more fiercely than of old.
For the Count Vaudemont will never brook,
His son should have a blind girl for his mate.
He will believe, and this will fire his wrath,
A cheat was practised on him, and that she
Was blind before the truce was ratified.

AL. Surmise to him most probable. But the king,
What did he in this strait ?

BERT. At first he veiled

In studious silence, that the child was blind,
Which none had e'er discovered from her looks ;
But soon from Cordova he summoned hither
The very famed physician, Ebn Jahia,
Whose skill is counted nigh miraculous.
He came and tried all sorts of remedies.

With sagest counsel, too, he showed us how
To rear her up in tender fosterage ;
And, last of all, he in the stars perused
Her horoscope.

AL. And there?

BERT. Found hope for us,
That Iolanthe should regain her sight,
When in her sixteenth year. That time is come,
And Ebn Jahia now is with the king.
He orders remedies which we apply,
Yet what their purpose I have never known ;
The hour, he says, hath even now arrived.
Heaven grant it may be so !

AL. But Iolanthe!
How heavily her fate must weigh her down!

MAR. She has no thought herself that she is blind.

AL. No thought that she is blind ! You surely jest !

MAR. Ah no, Sir Knight ! you very soon may learn,
That all which I have told you now is true.
But let me earnestly beseech you, sir,
When you converse with Iolanthe, still
To guard your lips with most religious care,
That so no syllable shall cross their bounds,
Which to the eye bears slightest reference.
This is the strict injunction laid on all
Who come within these precincts. Nothing name
Which through the power of vision must be known ;
Speak not before her of the light of day,
Nor of the moonbeams in the placid night,
Nor of its thousand stars. Alas ! no stars
Illume the lasting night wherein she dwells !



AL. And have you kept this rule implicitly?

BERT. We schooled ourselves from her most tender
years,

When there was little danger had we failed.

AL. With what intent has it been hid from her,
That she is blind? Who willed it should be so?

MAR. We know not whether 'twas the king's resolve,
Or whether Ebn Jahia so advised;
Yet I can easily explain the cause.

A coronet shall one day deck her brows,
As you are 'ware; so does her future hold
A brilliant promise forth, should all go well.
But it is feared, the consciousness of blindness
Might settle deep into her tender soul,
Untune her spirit, and from her senses take
Their equipoise, and that clear cheerfulness,
Which are a throne's most beauteous ornaments.
This consciousness 'tis purposed to avert.

AL. This is the reason, then, why she lives here,
Secluded from the world and all who might
Betray to her the secret of her loss?

BERT. 'Tis even so. This valley, locked within
The heart of yonder mountains of Vaucluse,
Is from the eye of all intruders safe.
You know, it is King René's chief delight
To tend and cultivate his plants and flowers.
Thus all you see was by himself arranged,
And with the trees and shrubs his daughter grew.
Here knows she every spot,—unerringly
Can find her way about without a guide.
Nor has her education been o'erlooked.

She weaves, spins, tends her garden-plots, and is
For ever occupied, and ever cheerful.
She makes songs too, and sings at leisure hours.

AL. Makes songs !

BERT. Ay, she makes songs. The king himself
Taught her the cunning of the troubadours ;
And ne'er a master of them all need blush
To own the verses which her fancy weaves.

AL. All this I can explain and understand ;
Yet how she ne'er suspects her blindness, I
Can scarce conceive. No ! this must be delusion.

MAR. Such it appears to you, whose eyesight serves
As a sure guide to every step you take.
Involuntarily you turn your gaze
Towards every sound that stirs. Even in the dark,
The accustomed light with fancied gleam deceives
you ;

But he, who from his earliest infancy,
From birth, mayhap, hath lacked the power of sight,
How shall he deem his fellow-creatures see ?
What's sight to him ? What can he comprehend,
Of all that wondrous power that's in the eye ?
Yet, as with ease we master by its aid
All that surrounds us, so the blind do hold
Hearing, touch, feeling, the air's soft impress,
And other means innumerable, at command,
Which are to us incomprehensible.

—This shall yourself observe, as I have said,
Before you have been long with Iolanthe.

AL. Now, by the mass, I long to see this wonder.
—Yet one thing more, that puzzles me, explain.

BERT. You err to think that Iolanthe is
So lonely, so forlorn. Behind these mountains
Lies, as you know, the convent of St Clara ;
And oftentimes the abbess and the nuns
Come here to visit her ; her father, too,
Brings with him stranger guests from time to time

MAR. That is a point,
On which 'tis not so easy to reply.
It may be, she suppresses many a thought.
She knows there is an entrance to this vale,
Hears the bell sound when any one arrives,
Brightens to hear it, and in silence waits,
With ear intent. Yet doth she never ask,
Where is the entrance, whitherward it leads ;
For she has heard that there are many things
She must not ask, but leave to years to teach.
So 'tis with children. Speak to them of God,
Of power omnipotent, of another life,
And mark how they will listen, opening wide
Their little eyes in wonder, as some doubt—
A passing shade—is painted on their looks ;
And then, at last, with touching faith, accept
For truth the things they may not comprehend
So now for Iolanthe the whole world

Is one vast mystery, which she oft would pierce.
Then will her father or the abbess say,
"Rest thee content, my child : thou art too young,
Some future time thou'lt comprehend it all."
In this she piously confides ; nor dreams
She wants the eyes' clear sight, to compass all
The splendours of this goodly universe.
—May it not be, sir, while we darkly muse
Upon our life's mysterious destinies,
That we in blindness walk, like Iolanthe,
Unconscious that true vision is not ours?
Yet is that faith our hope's abiding star.

AL. In this, good Martha, hast thou truly spoken.
But tell me, where is Iolanthe now?

BERT. She sleeps.

AL. How! Sleeps? And now?

BERT. For just one hour,

By the physician's order every day.
Yet 'tis no soft and natural sleep ; indeed
I'm puzzled sorely what to think of it.
By strange and uncouth words, and singular signs,
Does Ebn Jahia charm her to repose ;
Then doth he place upon her breast a stone,
A talisman or amulet, belike,
And only when he has removed the gem,
Does she awake again. I will confess,
This troubles me.

AL. Yet may we strongly trust
In Ebn Jahia's skill.

BERT. There lies my hope.
(*The bell rings.*)

MAR. Bertrand, the bell!

BERT. Nay, then, it is the king.
(*Exit through the concealed door.*)

AL. Comes the king often hither?

MAR. Yes, when he
Has fixed his quarters at the neighbouring palace,
We see him frequently. At times, however,
Whole months will pass without his coming here.

AL. Knows Iolanthe, then, it is the king?

MAR. No, she doth not, and that is well remembered.
She has no thought of that. She calls him father,
We others call him Raymbaud,—such the name
Of one that was a famous troubadour.

AL. Break off! The king!

SCENE II.

KING RENÉ, EBN JAHIA, and BERTRAND, *enter through
the concealed door.* ALMERIK, MARTHA.

RENÉ. Martha, I bring thee here
Good Ebn Jahia. As I learn, he hath
Been here to-day already once before.
How goes it now?

MAR. Even to a wish, my liege.

RENÉ. All that the leech enjoined thou hast fulfilled?
Neglected nothing? Has Iolanthe lain
With eyes close bandaged every night?

MAR.

She has.

RENÉ (*to EBN JAHIA*). That was a perilous venture.

It is strange

She bears it. Yet the chance was fortunate,

That the bee stung her on the temple lately.

This served us for a plausible pretext.

Ah! sure the little bee deceived itself.

In this fair world, that's tended by her care,

Where, like a flower, she grows amidst her flowers,

The insect, dazzled by the fragrant bloom,

Deemed that it nestled in a rose's bud.

Forgive me! It is sinful thus to speak

Of mine own child. But now no more of this.

Thou long'st to see the fruitage of thy skill.

Go, then, to Iolanthe. Bertrand! Martha!

Follow him in, perchance he may require you.

*(EBN JAHIA exit into the house, followed**by BERTRAND and MARTHA.)*

Now, Almerik, tell me, wert thou not amazed,

To see this valley so serene and still?

Was it not so? A little paradise?

AL. Indeed it is!

RENÉ.

Oh, had it been my fate,

Here in the midst of all that most I love,

Of beauty, science, art, to spend my days,

How gladly, then, had I foregone, for ever,

Naples, Lorraine, and this long, bitter strife

With Vaudemont!

AL.

This strife is now healed up,

And you expect Count Tristan here ere long.

Then all shall end in peace.

RENÉ. I hope it may,
And this my hope has daily gained in strength.
I told you—did I not?—that I expected
Geoffrey of Orange. He resided long
At Tristan's castle. The Count's teacher he
In minstrelsy, and poetry and song.
The youthful Count, so Geoffrey tells me, owns
A happy turn for poesy—a sense
Refined and gentle, with a mind of rare
Endowment and capacity of thought.
He sang to me a Sirventese, writ
By Tristan, nobly felt, and couched in words
Of a rare beauty. This I needs must own,
Though he be minded hostilely to me,
And would with grasping hand usurp Lorraine.
—But hush! I hear a voice.

*(Goes to the house and looks
in at the door.)*

See, Ebn Jahia
Has wakened her! Slowly her eyes she raises;
She speaks; yet speaks as in a dream, while he
Looks down observantly into her eyes.
Now doth he lay the amulet once more
Upon her bosom—and she sleeps again.

AL. How singular!

RENÉ. Most singular! This Moor
Possesses powers that fill me with alarm.
He comes. Now leave us, Almerik! Yet stay!
Hence to the palace! Here I must remain.
Soon as a letter comes from Tristan, haste
And bring it here to me.

AL.

Adieu, my liege.

(Exit, as EBN JAHIA enters from the house.)

RENÉ. My Ebn Jahia, com'st thou like the dove,
That bears the olive branch? Thou lookest grave,
And, like thine art, unfathomable. How,
How shall I construe what thy looks import?

EBN J. I have the strongest hopes, my noble liege.

RENÉ. Is't so? Oh, thou'rt an angel sent from
heaven!

Thy dusky visage, like that royal Moor's,
Who knelt beside our great Redeemer's cradle,
Heralds the star, shall cheer my night of gloom.
Say, Jahia, say, whereon thy hope is based?
What is thy counsel, what thy purpose? Speak!
'Tis written in a book, which late I read,
That oftentimes an unsound eye is cured
By application of the surgeon's knife.
This thou wilt never try, my Ebn Jahia;
Thou know'st the eye is a most noble part,
And canst not gain such mastery o'er thyself,
As to approach my Iolanthe's eyes
With instrument of steel. Nay, thou must dread
To mar the beauty of their azure depths,
That dark, deep fount, which still, though saddened o'er,
Wells forth such glorious radiance. Oh, her eyes,
How is it possible, that night should brood
On two such orbs of matchless brilliancy?

EBN J. Nay, be at ease! You need not fear for this.
'Twould aid us little, should I have recourse
To instruments.

RENÉ.

What is thy purpose, then?

EBN J. Your pardon, good my lord ! My treatment is
A mystery, like all my leech's craft ;
It scarce would serve my purpose to divulge it.
'Tis not the fruitage of a moment's growth,
No, but the slow result of wakeful years,
Shaped—step by step conducted to one point,
Whereat, so speed it heaven, it shall succeed ;
Ay, and succeed it must, this very day,
Or fail for ever.

RENÉ. How ! This very day ?

EBN J. Soon as the sun has sunk beneath the hills,
And a soft twilight spreads along the vale,
Such as her eyes, still to the light unused,
May bear with safety, I will test my plan.

RENÉ. Ah, Ebn Jahia, prithee, not to-day !
From day to day, from hour to hour, have I,
With restless eagerness, looked onwards for
This moment—and alas ! now it hath come,
My heart grows faint, and wishes it away.
—Think what I peril ! When the sun goes down,
My one best hope, perchance, goes down with it.
Thou'rt wrapt in thought. Art thou content to pause ?

EBN J. I will not wait.

RENÉ. Then tell me, dost thou fear ?
Art thou not certain of the issue ? Thou
Didst put to question yonder silent stars,
From which thy potent art can wring response.
What was their answer, tell me, Ebn Jahia ?
The horoscope—was't happy ?

EBN J. Yes, it was.
I told you so already. Yet the stars

Inclinant, non necessitant. They influence
 The fortunes of mankind, yet do they not
 Rule nature's laws with absolute control.
 Rest thee at ease : I have no fear for this.
 —Another hindrance menaces my skill.

RENÉ. A hindrance ?

EBN J. One, my liege, I apprehend,
 Which you will find it hard to obviate.
 Iolanthe, ere I bend me to my task,
 Must comprehend, what she till now has lacked—
 Must learn this very day that she is blind.

RENÉ. No, Ebn Jahia, no, this cannot be !

EBN J. It must be, or my skill is powerless.

RENÉ. No, no ! oh, never ! never ! Thou wilt not
 Constrain me to this monstrous cruelty,
 And strip her all at once, with sudden wrench,
 Of that unconsciousness, has been her blessing ;
 Not slowly, by degrees, but all at once,
 Force on her tender soul this fearful truth ?
 And if the cure should fail us after all ?
 Hast thou forgot, how we, year after year,
 With care almost incredible, have watched
 To keep from her this melancholy truth ?
 This course thyself suggested—showing me
 The difficult road, which I was bound to follow.
 Now, wilt thou raze the fabric thou hast reared ?
 Say, wherefore, wherefore ?

EBN J. I will tell you wherefore,
 So please you lend a favouring ear the while.
 You deem, belike, our sense of vision rests
 Within the eye ; yet is it but a means.

From the soul's depths the power of vision flows,
And those fine nerves, that on the eye converge,
From the brain's secret workshop emanate.
Iolanthe must be conscious of her state—
Her inward eye must first be opened, ere
The light can pour upon the outward sense.
A want must be developed in her soul ;
A feeling that anticipates the light,—
A craving sense—for know, my noble liege,
That nothing e'er is on mankind bestowed,
Unless for it he feel necessity.
Deep in his soul a yearning must arise
For a contentment, which it strives to win.
Let me, for you, exemplar take from what
Your studies make familiar. That fair art—
That joyous science of sweet poesy,
Which is so widely famed throughout Provence,—
Mankind receive it by the Muses' favour.
Is it not so ? But how ? Do all receive it ?
No ; only he within whose bosom dwelt,
As in a dream, a bright poetic world ;
And who hath yearned for it with quenchless love.

RENÉ. I'll not contest with thee, good Ebn Jahia !
I may not cope with thee in lore profound.
Yet pity's voice speaks loudly in my heart,
And drowns thy arguments with mightier tones.
I cannot do it ! No, it may not be.

EBN J. E'en as you will. I only can advise,
And if you will not trust to my advice,
Then I am useless here. So, fare ye well !
Hence to the convent I ! You'll find me there,

SCENE III.

TRISTAN *of Vaudemont*, GEOFFREY *of Orange*, each with
a cithern slung upon his shoulder.

GEOF. (*stopping in front of the concealed door*). Look
to your steps! 'Tis dark as midnight here!

TRIS. Push onward! Stay! Here is a door!

GEOF. A door?

TRIS. Patience! A bolt—it yields! What do I
see? (*Both enter.*)

GEOF. Heavens! What a gust of exquisite perfume!

TRIS. A garden—here! shrined in the mountain
waste!

What beauty, too, what order! Only look!

GEOF. I am amazed.

TRIS. What man is he, that owns
This witching spot? You know the country well,
And dwell hard by.

GEOF. Indeed, I cannot say.
Of such a paradise I never dreamed.
A garden of the tropics—studded o'er
With all rare flowers! Behold the lofty palms!

TRIS. The mansion rising through—how beautiful!
Half-hid with ivy and the clambering rose!
—And yet its inmates?

GEOF. Not a soul see I.
I could be sworn, this paradise arose
In some fair summer night, when Dian gave
One golden hour to her Endymion,

Veiling beneath these rocks their fearful joys !
But its inhabitants have taken flight.

TRIS. Nay, here be many signs of human hands,
Fair, I'll be sworn, and gentle. Here, see here
Fresh footmarks on the pathway !

GEOF. You are right.

A tiny foot and dainty ! Let us on !
By following this we scarce can go amiss.
Observe, it leads right onwards to the house !

TRIS. No, let us wait till somebody appears.
We should be most discourteous. Bad enough,
That we have come thus far without consent !

GEOF. Well, as you please. So our luck fails us
not,

I'll tax my courtesy, and wait in patience,
For, in good sooth, luck hath been ours indeed,
Hath it not, Tristan ? See, how things have fallen !
As near the convent idly on we strolled,
Whiling the time with interchange of song,
I chanced to spy King René passing near,
Wrapt in close talk with the Cordovan leech.
To 'scape his glance, you drag me after you,
And, hurrying on o'er rock and wilderness,
Here, at the mountain's base, we chance upon
Yon secret passage, craftily contrived.
Following it up, awhile we grope about
In darkness, and, in short, have landed here.
—But tell me now, what motive prompted you,
So to avoid the king ? To meet him, 'twas,
That you came here. You urged me to attend
Upon you at the interview to-morrow ;

And you—'tis known familiarly to all—
You have been long affianced to his daughter.

TRIS. Affianced! Yes, they say so. Yet was I
Scarce nine years old, when I was thus betrothed.
My father made the terms with Burgundy,
When we a truce concluded with the king.
But, Geoffrey, now I'm grown to riper years;
And as this contract, in the full career
Of victory, wronged and robbed me of my rights,
So on this marriage look I now with hate.
Unwillingly I came; unwillingly
In this vile business I am like to move.

GEOF. I grieve to hear it, for King René's sake.
For many a day, I know, his joy has been
The goodly promise of these nuptial ties.

TRIS. Goodly to him they may be, I believe.
—Know you his daughter?

GEOF. No, she has been reared
In some far Spanish convent, and came home
Here to her father, but to meet with you.
—But let us, friend, bethink us where we are!
We forced our way in, and it must be owned
The spot is charming. But the question now
Is, can we quite as easily retire?

TRIS. Nay, never fear.

GEOF. Would you not, then, find out
Whether this mansion hath inhabitants?
Assail the door! Shall I, then?

TRIS. Nay, let me!
In case some demon lord it in this place.
'Tis just, the danger first should light on me,

Whose charge it was, that lured you on to it.

(Knocks at the door.)

No—no one comes!

GEOF. Try if the door will open.

TRIS. It gives not way.

GEOF. Press harder—it will yield!

TRIS. So be it, then! *(Opens the door.)* Heavens,
Geoffrey, what a form!

GEOF. Some spirit?

TRIS. How! A spirit? Yes, methinks—
One of the radiant ministers of light!

Look!

GEOF. *(looking in)*. A fair girl upon a dainty couch!
Surely she sleeps!

TRIS. She sleeps. Her breathing heaves
Her bosom gently—gently sinks it down.
See now, a smile is hovering on her lips,
As though she dreamt of our bewilderment!

GEOF. I pray you, Tristan, let us fly from hence.
This witching vision doth disturb my soul,
Too witching all, and all too beautiful.
This is some wizard's keep—let us begone!
Come! Mystic serpents threaten us, I know.
—Tristan, where are you rapt? All heavenly powers!
He's charmed already! Rooted to the earth
He stands, and stares on her. Oh, Tristan, come!

TRIS. Speak softly, Geoffrey, for a breath might wake
her!

Speak softly! 'Twere a sin to break the calm,
The holy stillness, which her slumber sheds
On everything around!

GEOF. Oh, hear me, hear me!

TRIS. Hush! Not a word, I say! This place is holy!

(Kneels bending forward with outstretched arms towards the open door.)

Oh, be not angry, that with eyes profane
I have intruded on thy resting-place!

GEOF. Rise up! I tremble for you. You are caught
In an enchanter's spell. The vision is
Some cheating phantom. Follow me!

TRIS. I cannot.

GEOF. Then do not kneel there like a marble block!
Tush, be a man! If hence you will not fly,
At least command your spirits! Let us learn,
Who this fair creature is. Awake her!

TRIS. No!

That were a sin!

GEOF. If you will not, I will. *(Enters.)*

TRIS. Audacious man! He calls to her—hark, hark!
How now—he clasps her hand——

GEOF. *(rushing out).* Away, away!
She cannot wake. Her senses are enthralled
By some dark demon's necromantic spells.
Oh, come! I quake for fear. We've rudely broke
Into a holy place, will be our death.

TRIS. A holy place! You name it well. But it
Imports not death, but life. Well, well, no matter!
Come, let us quit this consecrated ground,
Which wrongly we intruded on. She sleeps.
It is unchivalrous to tarry——

GEOF. Come!

TRIS. Yet stay! I'll grant myself one little look,

One moment by her side, to scan her face,
Then follow you anon. *(Enters.)*

GEOR. See there, he kneels!
Upon her hand imprints one gentle kiss.
How he surveys her! There, he hath unclasped
A ribbon from her neck, and bears it off.
Now, Heaven be praised, he comes to me again.

TRIS. *(returns)*. Now have I graven deeply on my
heart

Her beauteous form. It cannot vanish now.
Ay, let us hence, and dread this witchery!
Yet did I vow to seek this spot again,
And, if I erred not, with a gracious smile
She heard my vow, and blessed it in her dreams.
See, Geoffrey, I have ta'en this ornament,
A gem of price, that lay upon her breast.
Like Jesse's son, who from the sleeping Saul
Took of his robe a fragment, for a sign
That in his hands the monarch's life had been,
So may this jewel likewise testify
That I was here, and that my life was placed
Within her hand, even while she lay in sleep.
Come, Geoffrey!

(Retires with GEOFFREY towards the concealed door, as IOLANTHE appears at the door of the house.)

SCENE IV.

TRISTAN. GEOFFREY. IOLANTHE.

(Notwithstanding IOLANTHE'S blindness, all her movements are unconstrained and decided. Only now and then a listening attitude, with a slight motion of the hand, as though she were feeling before her, betrays the want of sight. Her eyes are open, but frequently bent downwards, and with little motion in them.)

Io. *(at the door.)* Martha! Bertrand!

TRIS. Ha! 'tis she!

Io. Sure, some one spoke? *(Advances.)* Who's there?

TRIS. A stranger, who

Implores forgiveness, that he rudely broke
Yours and this place's sanctified repose.

Io. Give me thy hand! Thou never hast been here!
Nor do I even know thy voice. Didst speak
With Bertrand or with Martha on the way?

TRIS. I spoke with no one. Accident alone
Hath led me hither.

GEOF. *(aside to TRISTAN.)* Ask about Bertrand!Io. *(listening.)* And whom hast thou brought with thee?

TRIS. 'Tis my friend,

A troubadour and knight, who dwells hard by.

Io. You both are truly welcome. Will you not
Go in with me? 'Tis cool and fresher there.

GEOF. *(quickly.)* Nay, so you please, we'll tarry where
we are.

(*Aside to TRISTAN.*) 'Tis safer so methinks !

IO. (*still holding TRISTAN'S hand*). Thy hand is warm—
I feel the pulse's throb. Hath not the heat
Oppressed thee by the way? Art thou not thirsty?
Wait, and I'll bring thee forth a cup of wine.

(*Goes into the house.*)

TRIS. Oh ! What a lovely being ! What dignity,
What gracious gentleness in every feature :
And her sweet voice !

GEOF. A wondrous voice, indeed !
That fascinates the heart at unawares,
And binds it utterly in softest thrall !
Of noble birth she is, beyond all question ;
Yet—some precaution cannot be amiss.
Drink not the wine, dear Tristan, when it comes.

. TRIS. I would drink death, if from her hand, with joy !

(*IOLANTHE comes back with a flagon and cup.*)

IO. Here is the wine my father always drinks.
It is too strong for me : but will you taste it ?

(*Fills the cup and presents it to TRISTAN.*)

TRIS. (*as he drinks*). This to thy happiness, thou
lovely maid !

IO. Give now thy friend the cup, if he desire it.
I will go gather fruit for you—some dates
And grapes, or any other fruit you will.

(*Plucks fruit, and places it in a basket, which
she has taken from the table.*)

TRIS. (*giving GEOFFREY the cup*). There, Geoffrey,
drink !

GEOF. Have you felt nothing strange,
No lassitude—no—— ?

TRIS. Nothing. Never fear !

GEORGE. It *is* wine, then? (*Drinks.*) Right Malvoisie,
by heavens!

No better drinks King René's self, I trow. (*Drinks again.*)

Ha, what a wine ! Where we such nectar find,

In sooth, no demon can have mastery !

Io. (*rejoins them*). Here I have fruits, so please you
taste of them.

I'll place them on the table.

GEOF. Beauteous lady,

Already you so truly have refreshed us,

And in this cup have ministered a wine

So rare, and so delicious, we might deem,

And with best cause, our entertainment came

From some most wealthy, ay, and noble house.

Beauty and wine the loadstars are of song.

Then lend a friendly ear unto my words,

Which, lightly woven into a lay, unfold

At once our homage and our gratitude.

(Sings, accompanying himself on his cithern.)

The eagle we tell

By his sweep full well,

As proudly afar in the clouds he soars,

And the nightingale,

By the trilling wail

Her throat in the dewy May-time pours.

By valour and skill,

And a temperate will,

The knight approveth his worth to all ;

And deftly to sing,
With sweet minstrelling,
Makes troubadour honoured in bower and hall.

(Changes the measure.)

But when amid gentles and ladies gay,
His echoing harp he raises,
And seeks by the flow of his tuneful lay
To win him their guerdons, their praises ;
And when with the goblet the foot-page fine
His carol hath cheerly greeted,
Full soon doth he note by the noble wine,
'Neath a noble roof he's seated.

Io. Thy song is beautiful, and doth bespeak
A cunning high and rare.

TRIS. My friend is famed
Among Provence's younger troubadours.

Io. (*to* TRISTAN). Art thou, too, gifted with the power
of song ?

TRIS. Ah, I am but a novice ; yet, methinks,
Your gentleness doth make me bold to sing.
Then pray you for the deed accept the will.

*(Sings, preluding each verse with
a few notes of the cithern.)*

I came where the echoing city lay,
And over the mountains I took my way,
Weary and darkling, by rock and by lea ;
When a valley burst suddenly on my sight,
Basking and beaming in sunshine bright,
And gemmed with all beautiful flowers that be.

Here all was still. No sweet bird's note
On my listening ear in the silence smote,
No sound or of man or of life arose ;
And, as in some temple's most sacred hall,
In this vale of enchantment fair seemed all
To be lulled for aye in a charmed repose.

A door flew wide, and a form of light
Beamed, like a star, on my wondering sight ;
Like a dewy rosebud, oppressed with sleep,
Which a wizard's wand had over it thrown,
Didst thou seem to me, thou lovely one,
And all things anear thee a hush did keep.

The zephyr dreams on thy pearly cheek,
The flame on the hearth burns faint and weak,
The palm-trees drowsily droop their crest ;
For all things have life through thee alone,
For all things will only be thine own,
And close their eyelids when thine do rest.

Thou didst awake, and a soul of life,
Through air, and through flower and grove, grew rife,
As though a sunbeam their sleep had broke !
Oh, gentle rose, take to thy heart,
As the homage pure of my faltering art,
The lay which thy beauty to being woke !

IO. (*to TRISTAN after a pause, in which she stands
absorbed, with her hand upon her forehead.*) Lend
me the cithern.



*(After preluding upon the instrument, she sings,
accompanying herself with occasional chords.)*

Highly be honoured
The stranger guest,
Who comes with a blithesome
And cordial heart,—
Brings us a treasure,
Of story and measure,
And fills us with silent and wondering pleasure !

Yet higher than all
Be honour to him,
The guest who doth bring us
Song linked to the lyre,
Who living thoughts, woven
In melody, pours,
And on wingèd words freely and joyously soars !

With the minstrel enters
An influence holy
Under our portals ;
While that he singeth,
Listens the air,
Hushed are the flowerets,
And, lowly inclining,
Stay their sweet breathing to list to the strain.

You, O ye strangers,
You who came hither
With harp and with song,
With me dividing

King René's Daughter.

Your souls' inspiration,
You do I thank !
Ah ! I so feeble,
I could not fathom
All that you sang.
Novel and strange,
Strange as yourselves,
It swept me along, the light wingèd song.

Here in the valley,
Deep in the thicket,
Oftentimes nestleth
A stranger bird ;
And in the evening,
Dream-like and still,
Her song from the leaves doth the nightingale trill.

No one can teach me
To sweep the guitar,
Till it throbs like her song.
No one can give me
Her rapturous strain,
That lifted my soul on its pinions, again.

Whence, O ye strangers,
Cometh your song ?
Say, is its home there,
Where, as I deem,
Fond aspirations,
Yearning and sighs,
In the slumberous silence of evening arise ?



Say, have the airy
Tenants of ether
Taught you their strains ?
Strains so enchanting,
Flowing so wildly ;
Strains that have freighted
My dreams with delight ;
Strains full of story,
Life-like and clear,
Strains that gave glory
To all that is near !

GEOF. What lofty poesy !

TRIS. (*to IOLANTHE*). To the nightingale
You have compared our song. O were I but
The meanest, tiniest of yonder birds,
That build their nests anigh your dwelling-place,
And evermore might list the lovely strains
That do inspire your breast !

GEOF. Oh, noble lady,
There is one question—pray you pardon it !
Which musing wonder forces to my lips.
You live here from the world cut off, and none
Of all the knights and ladies of Provence,
Your rare perfections e'er have heard or known.
What line so blest can claim you for its child,
And who your father ?

IO. How ! not know my father ?
That gives me wonder ; for none e'er come here
Who know not him.

GEOF. I pray you, what his name ?

IO. The rest do call him Raymbaud.

GEOF. Raymbaud? Raymbaud?

Is he a knight?

IO. A knight?

GEOF. Or warrior?

Wears he a helm, and shield, and golden spurs?

What his pursuits?

IO. That have I ne'er inquired.

GEOF. Why are you pent up here so close?

IO. (*surprised*). So close?

GEOF. Ay, close and lonely?

IO. Lonely I am not.

There you do much mistake.

GEOF. Yet no one's here?

IO. No, no one's here. You're right; I cannot guess

How this should be. I never am alone.

But only wait, and I will summon Bertrand.

He will be truly glad that you are come.

(Exit into the house.)

GEOF. Now 'twill be seen who is this valley's lord.

Yet can I not subdue the rising thought,

That some dark mystery is here on foot,

Which he that owns this valley will be loth

That we should pry into. You cannot fail

To note, how cunningly yon door is covered

With moss, and stones, and branches, that, when closed,

It scarce may be distinguished from the rock.

Take my advice and tarry near the door.

I will but wait till some one comes, and then

Betake me straightway to the mountain pass,

To keep the entrance clear for our escape.

Some of your people I may chance to meet.
Should aught appear amiss, I will return
Upon the moment. Do you hear me, Tristan?

TRIS. Ay, ay! Go, go! There!

GEOF. Is your heart enchained?
Has this young beauty quite enchanted you?

TRIS. No, I am ill at ease. My head's confused.
I almost think this tranquil valley is
That goal for which I've panted all my days;
That here at length my restless soaring pride
Shall find its true repose.

GEOF. (*gravely*). I prithee, friend,
Remember, that King René waits for you.

TRIS. What is King René or his hopes to me?
What! For a province, which by law and right
Is truly mine, by our good swords achieved,
Shall I, in my youth's holiday, be chained
To his daughter—to a girl whom no one knows—
Whom no one e'er hath seen—whilst I——

GEOF. You rave.
This fit will pass. But now you are bewitched.
Stifle this feverish passion in your breast.

TRIS. Could I do that, I were bewitched indeed.

GEOF. Hush! hush! Some one approaches.

(*IOLANTHE returns from the house.*)

IO. Are you here?

GEOF. Wilt lead us to the master of the house?

IO. Alas! they are all gone, and no one came
In answer to my call. They have forsook me.

TRIS. But they will come again.

IO. Yes; thou art right—

GEOF. (*to* TRISTAN). You stay here?
TRIS. I will.

Io. (*listening*). Goes thy friend hence?
TRIS. He will return anon.

'Tis here !

TRIS. Yes ; I conjecture so.

TRIS. In its stead,

Io. A rose? Oh, willingly!
(*Plucks and gives him a white rose.*)

Io. What meanest thou—a red one?

TRIS. (*pointing*). One of these.

Io. Take it thyself!

TRIS. (*confused*). Yes, certainly ; you're right.
And yet sometimes——

Io. Well, well?—sometimes?—speak, speak!

TRIS. I think there are—that there are certain things,

Which we distinguish by their hues alone,
As various kinds of flowers, and various stuffs.

Io. Thou mean'st by this their character, their form;

Is it not so?

TRIS. Nay, not exactly that.

Io. Is it so hard, then, to distinguish flowers?

Are not the roses round, and soft, and fine,
Round to the feeling, as the zephyr's breath,
And soft and glowing as a summer's eve?
Are gillyflowers like roses? No, their scent
Bedizzies, like the wine I gave to thee.

And then a cactus—are its arrowy points
Not stinging, like the wind, when frosts are keen?

TRIS. (*aside*). Amazement! (*Aloud.*) Have they never told thee, then,

That objects, things, can be distinguished, though
Placed at a distance,—with the aid—of sight?

Io. At distance? Yes! I by his twittering know
The little bird that sits upon the roof,
And, in like fashion, all men by their voice.
The sprightly steed whereon I daily ride,
I know him in the distance by his pace,
And by his neigh. Yet—with the help of sight?
They told me not of that. An instrument
Fashioned by art, or but a tool, perhaps?
I do not know this sight. Canst teach me, then,
Its use and purpose?

TRIS. (*aside*). O almighty powers !
She does not know or dream that she is blind.

Io. (*after a pause*). Whence art thou ? Thou dost use
so many words,

I find impossible to understand,
And in thy converse, too, there is so much
For me quite new and strange ! Say, is the vale
Which is thy home so very different
From this of ours ? Then stay, if stay thou canst,
And teach me all that I am wanting in.

TRIS. No, O thou sweet and gracious lady, no !
I cannot teach what thou art wanting in.

Io. Didst thou but choose, I do believe thou
couldst.

They tell me I am tractable and apt.
Many, who erewhile have been here, have taught me
Now this, now that, which readily I learned.
Make but the trial. I am very sure
Thou hatest me not. Thy tones are mild and gentle.
Thou wilt not say me "nay," when I entreat.
Oh, speak ! I'm all attention when thou speakest.

TRIS. Alas ! attention here will stead thee little.
Yet—tell me one thing. Thou hast surely learned,
That of thy lovely frame there is no part
Without its purpose, or without its use.
Thy hand and fingers serve to grasp at much,
Thy foot, so tiny as it is, with ease
Transports thee wheresoe'er thy wishes point ;
The sound of words, the tone, doth pierce the soul
Through the ear's small and tortuous avenues ;
The stream of language gushes from thy lips ;

Within thy breast abides the delicate breath,
Which heaves, unclogged with care, and sinks again.

IO. All this I've noted well. Prithee, go on.

TRIS. Then tell me, to what end dost thou suppose
Omnipotence hath gifted thee with eyes ?
Of what avail to thee are those twin stars,
That sparkle with such wondrous brilliancy,
They scorn to grasp the common light of day ?

IO. (*touches her eyes, then muses for a little*). You ask
of what avail—how can you ask ?

And yet, I ne'er have given the matter thought.
My eyes ! my eyes ! 'Tis easy to perceive.
At eve, when I am weary, slumber first
Droops heavy on my eyes, and thence it spreads
O'er all my body, with no thought of mine,
As feeling vibrates from each finger's tip.
Thus then I know my eyes avail me much.
And hast not thou experience had enough,
Wherein thine eyes can minister to thee ?
Only the other morn, as I was planting
A little rose-bush here, a nimble snake
Leapt out and bit me in the finger ; then
With the sharp pain I wept. Another time,
When I had pined for many tedious days,
Because my father was detained from home,
I wept for very gladness when he came !
Through tears I gave my bursting heart relief,
And at mine eyes it found a gushing vent.
Then never ask me, unto what avail
Omnipotence hath gifted me with eyes.
Through them, when I am weary, comes repose ;

TRIS. Oh, forgive me !

Io. (*after a pause*). Thy words are laden with a wondrous power.

Say, from what master didst thou learn the art,
To charm, by words, which yet are mysteries?
Meseemed as though I trod some path alone,
Which I had never trod before ; and yet
All seems to me—all, all that thou hast said—
So godlike, so enchanting ! Oh, speak on—

Yet no, speak not ! Rather let me in thought
Linger along the words which thou hast spoken,
That mingled pain and rapture in my soul !

Enter GEOFFREY hurriedly.

GEOF. I see men at a distance coming hither !
Do not forget that we are here alone.

TRIS. (*to IOLANTHE*). Now, noble maiden, must I
take my leave.

IO. Ah ! no, no ! Wherefore wilt thou go ?

TRIS. I'll come

Again, and soon—to-day I'll come again.
Wilt thou permit me, with thy hand to mark
How high I am, that, when we next shall meet,
Thou may'st distinguish me ?

IO. What need of that ?

I know that few resemble thee in height.
Thy utterance comes to me as from above,
Like all that's high and inconceivable.
And know I not thy tone ? Like as thou speakest
None speak beside. No voice, no melody
I've known in nature, or in instrument,
Doth own a resonance so lovely, sweet,
So winning, full, and gracious as thy voice.
Trust me, I'll know thee well amidst them all !

TRIS. Then fare thee well, until we meet once
more !

IO. There—take my hand. Farewell ! Thou'lt come
again—

Again, and soon ?—Thou know'st I wait for thee !

TRIS. (*kneels and kisses her hand*). Oh, never doubt
that I will come again.

My heart impels me hither. Though I go,
Still of my thoughts the better half remains ;
And whatsoe'er is left to me of life
Yearns back to thee with evermore unrest.
Farewell !

(*Exit through the concealed door, following GEOF-
FREY, who has retired during the last speech.*)

IO. Hark ! there he goes ! Among the hills,
From which so oft the stranger's foot resounds,
Now echoes his light step. Oh, hush, hush, hush !
I hear it now no more.—Yes ; there again !
But now,—'tis gone !—Will he indeed return ?
If he, too, like so many guests before,
Should come but this one time ! Oh ! no, no, no !
Did he not promise me, and pledge his vow,
He would come back to-day ? The dews are falling ;
Already eve draws on.—Ah, no !—to-day
He cannot come.—Perhaps to-morrow, then ?
But now it is so lonely here.

SCENE V.

IOLANTHE, MARTHA, *afterwards* KING RENÉ and
EBN JAHIA, *then* ALMERIK.

MAR. (*enters from behind the house, and advances rapidly, on seeing IOLANTHE*). Dear child!

Great heaven! How come you thus awake, and here?

Io. Oh, Martha, come to me! Where have you been?

MAR. Afield among the servants. But explain—
Who—who awoke you?

Io. Of myself I woke.

MAR. How! Of yourself?

Io. No otherwise know I.
But list—as yet you know not—Here have been
Strange guests!

MAR. You mock me! Who were they?

Io. Two strangers whom I did not know at all,
And who, besides, were never here before.
It was such pity you had gone away!

MAR. You dream, my child. Two strangers? Whence
and how?

It cannot be!

Io. Whence did the strangers come?
I asked not that; for you have charged me oft,
That I with questionings should not torment
Our visitors.

MAR. Who were they, then, my child?

Io. Indeed, I do not know.

MAR. Were you alone, then?



Io. I called on you, but yet you heard me not.

MAR. (*aside*). Heavens! Was it possible? (*Aloud*.)

Say on, my child!

Io. Ah, Martha, none e'er came to us before,
Like these two strangers—like, at least, to one.
It cannot surely be, but that he comes
From some fair land of marvel, different quite
From this our land. For potent was his speech,
Yet gentle and affectionate as thine.

(KING RENÉ and EBN JAHIA enter unobserved
through the concealed door, and remain
listening in the background.)

He gave me greeting with a song. Oh, Martha!
A song that teemed with meanings marvellous;
It charmed the tears into mine eyes, although
I scarcely fathomed half of what it meant.

MAR. Be calm, my love! (*Aside*.) What am I doomed
to hear?

(*Aloud*.) But tell me, pray, of what he spoke with thee?

Io. Of much—oh much! to me both new and
strange;

Knowledge had he of many, many things,
Whereof before I never heard. He said—
Yet I, alack! could comprehend him not—
He said, we could distinguish many things
With—with the help of sight.

MAR. (*aside*). O God!

Io. Dost thou

Know what he meant by this?

MAR. (*observes the KING and EBN JAHIA*). Great
heaven! the king!

RENÉ (*advances*). My child!

IO. (*falling on his neck*). My own beloved father,
art thou here?

RENÉ. Thy tutor, Ebn Jahia, comes with me.

IO. He too! Where is he? Let me give you welcome!
(EBN JAHIA *gives her his hand*.)

RENÉ (*takes MARTHA aside, while EBN JAHIA converses
with IOLANTHE*). What has occurred?

MAR. O God! I do not know.

In full reliance, that she could not wake,
Till she was wakened up, we left the house
While she lay sleeping. But the while—so she
Maintains, although 'tis scarcely possible,
Some stranger has been here, and talked with her.

RENÉ. Imprudent haste! When I went after him,
I did not mark to close the door behind me.
Well, Martha, and this stranger?

MAR. He has spoken—

So far as I can gather from the maze,
Wherein she still doth wander—of her blindness.

RENÉ. How! Of her blindness! Well, 'tis Heaven's
decree,

That she beforehand should be made aware!
So be it! (*Beckons to EBN JAHIA*.) Ebn Jahia, hast thou
heard?

EBN J. This accident was fortunate indeed.
A stranger woke her. Here upon the table
I found the amulet. Yet what she heard
Of her condition, is but dark to her.
I must require that she be fully told,
As you agreed.

RENÉ. My resolution's taken. (*Approaches IOLANTHE.*)
Lend me thine ear attentively, my child !
No longer may it be hidden, that thy life
Hath reached a climax, that will task thy firmness.
Wilt thou with patience hear me? Patiently,
If unexpected sorrow wound thy soul,
Learn to endure this sorrow?

IO. Father, say on !
It will be less severe, if from thy lips
It come to me.

RENÉ. Then listen, Iolanthe.
I know not what the stranger said to thee ;
Yet I surmise, he told thee—what with care
We have till now concealed—that to thy soul
There lacks one potent instrument, to grasp
The world that lies around thee ; and 'tis true !
For what thou lackest is the gift of sight.

IO. Even so ; and yet I understood him not.

RENÉ. Then learn from me: There is a certain power,
Which men do call the light. Like wind and storm,
It doth descend unto us from above,
And, like to these, with swiftness uncontrolled.
The objects, which it touches, gain a new
Significance, and a peculiar stamp,
And oftentimes with warmth 'tis closely blent.
'Tis through the eye it finds its way to us,
And by the power of seeing it we gain
A true perception of the universe,
As it went forth from the Creator's hand,
And apprehend His wisdom and His goodness.
What thou by slow degrees and toilsome pain,

Hast, until now, been forced to guess, the eye
Gives us to see and recognise with ease,
By its consistence and peculiar form.
(*With emotion.*) Early thine eye the power of vision lost,
And this fair frame of earth, this radiant realm,
To thee, my darling child, was early closed—
And all our care could scantily compensate
The loss, which thou in infancy sustained :
All we could do was, from thee still to ward
The shock and burden of intrusive cares,
And hide from thee their bitter origin.

Io. Ah, father ! These are wondrous words—to me
Incomprehensible. The universe,
How it came forth from the Creator's hand,
Knew I not that ? Was this shut up from me ?
How canst thou say so ? My Creator, have I
Not recognised Him in the universe ?
Hath not the roaring blast, the zephyr's breath—
Hath not the warmth, that circles everywhere,
The earth's so fit arrangement, and its power
To nurture plants with blossom and with fruits—
Hath not stone, metal, and the flowing streams,
The choir of sweet birds' voices, shown me well
The great Creator in the universe ?
And have I not by thee, even as by all
That's dear to me, been taught to comprehend
What our Creator with the world designed ?
Even I am an expression of His will.
Where'er I turn—in nature, in the speech
Of others, in the depths of mine own being,
In thoughts that spring from thoughts, an endless chain,



In all, to me the self-same voice resounds,
And of His glory loudly testifies.

RENÉ (*aside to EBN JAHIA*). Ah, Ebn Jahia, this so
lovely faith,
We have destroyed it !

Io. Explain one thing to me !
I with my eyes, it seems, should grasp the world.
Yon stranger, too, who lately was with me,
And whose strange words are stamped so deeply here,
He spoke of sight. What is it, then, to see ?
Can I, O father, see his voice, which touched
My soul with joy and sadness ? Can I see
With these mine eyes the nightingale's thick note,
Whereon I've mused so oft, and vainly striven
To follow it in thought away, away ?—
Or is her song a flower, whose fragrant breath
I know, but not its root, and stem, and leaves ?

RENÉ. Oh, my dear child, each of thy questions
fills
My soul with agony. Trust, love, to me,
And leave it to a happier time, to show
What now to thee must be inexplicable.
One thing, however, know. I have a hope,
The hope, which hath sustained me until now,
That yet thy sight may be restored to thee :
That thy dear eyes may open once again
To the glad sunbeams ; and oh, grant it, Heaven !
Thy noble friend and tutor, Ebn Jahia,
With his rare leechcraft hath been long preparing
The favourable hour to test our hopes.
Now is it come, my own, my darling child !

Confide in him. Go with him to the house.
 Martha shall wait upon thee.—At the first
 Thou'lt sink into a slumber—and from that
 If so it be Heaven's gracious will—aroused——

(Is stifled with emotion.)

Io. What ails thee, father? Wherefore shakes thy
 hand?

My own dear father, joy'st thou not, that now
 The hour has come, thou'st panted for so long?
 Thou fearest it will prove unfortunate.
 Yet even then shall I not be, as ever,
 Thy child, thine own dear child—thy child, who joys
 To be so dear—joys in her happy lot?
 Let me go in, then——

RENÉ.

Oh, my child, my child!

Io. Nay, do not fear! For what my sage kind
 master

Has pondered well, will prosper, I am sure.
 It feels to me, as though even now I knew
 The singular power which thou hast called the light,
 And it had found its way to me already.
 Ah, while that wondrous stranger was beside me,
 A feeling quivered through me, which I ne'er
 Had known before, and every word he spoke
 Resounded like an echo in my soul,
 With new and unimagined melodies.
 —Didst thou not say, the power of light is swift,
 And gives significance to what it touches?
 That it is also closely blent with warmth—
 With the heart's warmth? Oh, I know it is.
 If what thou call'st the light consist in this,

Then a forewarning tells me, it will be
Revealed to me to-day. Yet on one point
Thou dost mistake. 'Tis not the eye that sees ;
Here, close beside the heart, our vision lies ;
Here is it seated in remembrance sweet,
A reflex of the light that pierced my soul,
The light I go with bounding hope to meet !

(Exit into the house with MARTHA.)

RENÉ (*to EBN JAHIA, who is about to follow*). Stay,
Ebn Jahia ! Canst understand all this ?

Where is the stranger, who intruded thus
Upon her bosom's peace ? How to myself
Can I explain these passion-laden words ?
What thinkest thou ?

EBN J. Not easily explained
Is the full climax of a woman's mood,
And this, I own, goes counter to my plans.

RENÉ. Explain thyself !

EBN J. Suppose her thoughts are bent
To rest upon this stranger—then, 'twould seem,
That he controls her, and I strongly doubt
A happy issue to my art. And yet
In this conjuncture two desires may meet,
Which, blent in intimate communion, may
Strive to one end with like intensity.
In this hope I may rest—but only feebly.

(Exit into the house.)

RENÉ. Who could it be, was here ? Unless Bertrand
Should chance to know——

(Enter ALMERIK through the concealed door.)

My Almerik ! Thou here ?

AL. I bring a letter for my liege.

RENÉ.

From Tristan ?

(Breaks open the seal.)

It is from him. What do I see? Come hither!

He breaks with me. He wishes to undo

Our solemn contract.

AL.

How! Undo the contract?

RENÉ *(reading)*. Amazement! He admits him in
the wrong,

And leaves to me to dictate the amends ;

Yet—he repudiates my daughter's hand.

AL. Matchless audacity!

RENÉ.

Ah, Almerik,

This is the fate that dogs me evermore.

An evil portent this, I fear me much,

For what this hour may bring. These nuptials,

Whereon I had the fairest visions reared,

Unconsciously were wedded with the hope,

That Iolanthe should regain her sight.

One hope is gone—a little time may see

The other crushed. Yet no! I will not stoop

To foolish fond lamentings! Let that come,

Which Heaven in wisdom hath ordained for us!

Who brought the letter?

AL.

One of Geoffrey's people,

Who said, that Tristan now was lodged with him.

RENÉ. With Geoffrey? Well, there still, perchance,
is hope.

Perchance he may—But yet—What noise is that?

The clash of arms resounding from the pass!

AL. *(approaches the door)*. They force an entrance—

RENÉ. Force? Injurious knaves!

AL. A handful of our people——

RENÉ. Out with your sword!

They shall not flout King René unchastised.

SCENE VI.

KING RENÉ, ALMERIK, TRISTAN *in complete armour, with his train.* Afterwards GEOFFREY, *with his train.*

(During the progress of this scene, the evening red spreads over the valley and the distant hills, and remains so till the close of the piece.)

TRIS. Give back! The force, that sought to keep
the pass,
Has yielded to our arms. Do you surrender?

RENÉ. How now! What man art thou, whose ruffian
hands

With shock of arms doth desecrate this ground?
Stand, or my wrath shall strike thee to the dust!

TRIS. Husband thy words, old man. I have no fears.
I do believe, this place is in the thrall
Of some unholy and malignant power,
Which keeps thee trembling, but gives nerve to me.
If that thou be'st a sorcerer, and dost hope
For aid from magic spells, despair thy charm.
For know, the Pope did consecrate this sword;
This scarf was woven, too, by holy hands

Within the Mary Convent at Avignon,
 And, 'neath this mail of proof, abides the will
 To quell thee, as Saint George the dragon quelled.

RENÉ. Deluded man, what motive brings thee here?

TRIS. Reply to me! Art thou this valley's lord?

RENÉ. Truly I am this valley's lord, I own—
 Nor ends my title there. But who art thou?

Enter GEOFFREY, with his train.

GEOF. What do I see? King René!—(*kneels*)—
 Noble king!

TRIS. What's here? King René!

RENÉ. Geoffrey, thou in league
 With one that is thy monarch's foe?

GEOF. Your pardon!

He posted on before. I came too late.

RENÉ (*to* TRISTAN). Yet tell me, who art thou?

TRIS. My name is Tristan
 Of Vaudemont; a name you well do know.

RENÉ. How, Tristan? (*To* GEOFFREY.) Is this true?

GEOF. 'Tis as he says.

RENÉ (*musings*). And so 'twas you belike, as I conclude,

Were here to-day already?

TRIS. Yes, my liege,

Chance, not presumption, led me to this place.

I did not dream that you were ruler here.

RENÉ. But say, what motive brings you back again?

TRIS. You know it.

RENÉ. Nay, I know it not. Explain.

TRIS. Can this be so? Within this blooming vale,
Where all is marvellous, there lives concealed,
And its most foremost wonder, a fair girl,
Whose praise not all Provence's troubadours
Could chant in measures equal to her worth.

RENÉ. And this fair girl, you say? Continue, sir!

TRIS. Upon my soul such impress deep hath wrought,
That I am bound her slave for evermore.

RENÉ. And know you who she is?

TRIS. No. Yet there's proof
Upon her countenance, and in her words,
Of high degree, and inborn nobleness.

RENÉ. And have you noted not, that nature, who
In all things else hath been so bountiful,
Left her one flaw?

TRIS. Ah yes, alas! she's blind!
Yet there doth flow within her soul a light,
That makes all luminous, which else were dark!

RENÉ. And though you are aware that she is blind——

TRIS. Yet at her feet with rapture would I lay
The golden circle of my earldom down.

RENÉ. Now by the holy image in Clairvaux,
You are the rarest marvel of our vale!
You press in here, with weapons in your hand,
To bear off that, which hath for years been yours,
Yet which you now insultingly contemn.

TRIS. How so, my liege?

RENÉ. Know then, that this fair girl,
Who took your heart a prisoner, is my daughter.

TRIS. Your daughter, she?

RENÉ. My daughter, my young count:

The same whom you, as this your letter bears,
 Can in no wise consent to take for bride ;
 The same who raised in you dislike so strong,
 That, but to 'scape from her, you were content
 To quit your claims for ever to Lorraine !
 The same, moreover, whom you so have charmed,
 That I might almost doubt, if the poor girl
 So lightly would abandon you.

TRIS. My liege,

Thou wilt not mock me with so wild a joy.

RENÉ. 'Tis e'en as I have said.

TRIS. But why was she——

RENÉ. Shut up within this vale ? Of that anon.

You little deem, my lord, that you are come
 At a momentous crisis. Iolanthe,
 My darling child, perchance, e'en while we talk,
 Sinks into darkest night for evermore,
 Or wakes to taste the glorious light of day.

TRIS. What sayest thou, my liege ?

RENÉ. This very hour

Has the physician, Ebn Jahia, chosen
 To see, if possibly—(*approaches the house*)—But hush !
 methinks

There is a stir within. Keep silence, all !
 She speaks. Oh, Tristan, hear ! Iolanthe speaks !
 Ah, are these sounds of pleasure or of wail,
 That murmur o'er my darling angel's lips ?
 —But some one comes.

SCENE VII.

*To the others enter BERTRAND, afterwards MARTHA,
IOLANTHE, and EBN JAHIA.*

RENÉ (*to BERTRAND, who enters from the house*).

Quick, Bertrand, quick and tell me,

How goes on all within ?

BERT.

Alas ! I know not.

She has awaked, and it is nearly over ;

But I ran forth in terror.

Enter MARTHA hastily.

MAR. She can see !

RENÉ. How, Martha, see ?

TRIS. Oh grant it, Heaven !

MAR. Hush, hush !

She's coming forth.

*Enter EBN JAHIA, leading IOLANTHE by the hand.
(He beckons to the others to retire.)*

IO. Where art thou leading me ?

O God, where am I ? Support me—oh, support me !

EBN J. Calm thee, my child !

IO. Support me—oh, stand still !

I ne'er was here before—what shall I do

In this strange place ? Oh, what is that ? Support me !

It comes so close on me, it gives me pain.

EBN J. Iolanthe! Calm thee! Look upon the earth
That still hath been to thee thy truest friend,
And now, too, greets thee with a cordial smile.
—This is the garden thou hast ever tended.

Io. My garden—mine? Alas, I know it not.
The plants are terrible to see—take care!
They are falling on us!

EBN J. Cease your fears, my child.
These stately trees are the date-palms, whose leaves
And fruit to thee have been long known.

Io. Ah no!
Indeed, I know them not! (*Raises her eyes towards the*
sky.) This radiance too,

That everywhere surrounds me—yon great vault,
That arches there above us—oh, how high!
What is it? Is it God? Is it His spirit,
Which, as you said, pervades the universe?

EBN J. Yon radiance is the radiance of the light.
God is in it, like as He is in all.
Yon blue profound, that fills yon airy vault,
It is the heaven, where, as we do believe,
God hath set up His glorious dwelling-place.
Kneel down, my child! and raise your hands on high,
To heaven's o'erarching vault—to God—and pray!

Io. Ah, teach me then to pray to Him as I ought.
No one hath ever told me, how I should
Pray to this Deity who rules the world!

EBN J. Then kneel thee down, my darling child, and
say,
“Mysterious Being, who to me hast spoken,
When darkness veiled mine eyes, teach me to seek Thee,

In Thy light's beams, that do illume this world ;
Still, in the world, teach me to cling to Thee !”

Io. (*kneels*). Mysterious Being, who to me hast spoken,
When darkness veiled mine eyes, teach me to seek
Thee,

In Thy light's beams, that do illume this world ;
Still, in the world, teach me to cling to Thee !

—Yes, He hath heard me. I can feel He hath,
And on me pours the comfort of His peace.

He is the only one that speaks to me,
Invisible and kindly, as before.

EBN J. Arise, arise, my child, and look around.

Io. Say what are these, that bear such noble forms !

EBN J. Thou know'st them all.

Io. Ah, no, I can know nothing.

RENÉ (*approaching* IOLANTHE). Look on me, Io-
lanthe—me, thy father !

Io. (*embracing him*). My father ! Oh, my God !
Thou art my father !

I know thee now—thy voice, thy clasping hand.

Stay here ! Be my protector, be my guide !

I am so strange here in this world of light.

They've taken all that I possessed away—

All that in old time was thy daughter's joy.

RENÉ. I have culled out a guide for thee, my child.

Io. Whom mean'st thou ?

RENÉ (*pointing to* TRISTAN). See, he stands expect-
ing thee.

Io. The stranger yonder ? Is he one of those
Bright cherubim, thou once didst tell me of ?
Is he the angel of the light come down ?

RENÉ. Thou knowest him—hast spoken with him.
Think !

IO. With him—with him? (*Holds her hands before
her eyes.*) Father, I understand.

In yonder glorious form must surely dwell
The voice, that late I heard—gentle, yet strong,
The one sole voice that lives in nature's round.
(*To TRISTAN, who advances towards her.*) Oh, but one
word of what thou saidst before !

TRIS. Oh, sweet and gracious lady !

IO. List, oh, list !
With these dear words the light's benignant rays
Found out a way to me ; and these sweet words
With my heart's warmth are intimately blent.

TRIS. (*embraces her*). Iolanthe ! Dearest !

RENÉ. Blessings on you both
From God, whose wondrous works we all revere !
(*Curtain drops.*)

NOTE.

BEAUTIFUL in conception as the main idea of this drama is, and charmingly as it has been carried out, the poem seems to the mere reader to want movement and variety of character for the purposes of the stage. A genius in the impersonator of Iolanthe akin to that of the poet could alone atone for this defect. When I translated the drama, I had in view for Iolanthe the power of lifting her impersonations into the region of the ideal, without losing hold of pure human character and emotion, which distinguished Miss Helen Faucit. In her hands the little piece became a great success, and while it drew crowded audiences, inspired the warmest sympathy and admiration. How this came about, has been admirably explained in a letter by William Carleton, the author of 'Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry,' to the 'Dublin Express' newspaper in May 1856. This fine criticism seems to me to be worthy of reproduction, both for its own excellence and as preserving the record of an impersonation which was certainly unique of its kind.

"SIR,—I need scarcely apologise to you for the privilege I am about to ask of offering a few observations upon Miss Faucit's impersonation on Saturday night of Iolanthe in the drama of 'King René's Daughter.' I had read the story in more than one shape; I had read the play itself, but never for a moment imagined that it could be produced upon the stage. . . . When I saw in the papers that Miss Faucit was about to hazard the dangerous experiment of appearing in it, I felt as if she had been led, or rather misled, by her great

successes, to encounter a difficulty which must be fatal to her. 'This,' I said, 'is her campaign to Moscow; better stay at home, and rest contented with the laurels she has won.' Still I felt—and, I must confess, with fear and trembling—a peculiar interest in the result of this exhibition. The heroine is blind, and I myself had written a tale in which the hero is in a similar predicament. While writing that tale, 'The Clarionet,' I made it a point to get into conversation with such blind persons as had never remembered sight. I studied them deeply, and observed both their sentiments upon topics involving the necessity of sight and the motions peculiar to their unhappy condition. From all this, you will perceive that I felt more than ordinary interest in watching the conduct of Miss Faucit in the character of the blind princess Iolanthe. I mention these circumstances as a justification for the observations I am about to make."

After giving a sketch of the plot of the drama, Mr Carleton proceeds,—

"This is a simple plot—almost a tame one—and, I must confess, I expected little from it. But what will not genius do?

"At length Iolanthe enters, and here is the mystery. Although her eyes are bright and beautiful, yet such is her (Miss Faucit's) exquisite perception of truth, and her profound impressions of what is appropriate and just and necessary to the character she undertakes, that, in spite of these bright and beautiful eyes, it was impossible for any one possessed of common observation to doubt for a moment that that radiant creature was blind. The action—if action it can be called—resembles nothing else in the shape of character that ever appeared upon this or any other stage. It was not action, but some divine effusion that seemed to emanate from her whole person. There was no vehemence, for that would have been wholly out of keeping—the blind are never vehement—but there was that beautiful serenity of aspect for which the blind are almost uniformly remarkable. There was not, in fact, in her whole personation of the character—the most difficult that was ever undertaken—one single departure from its truth and propriety. It was one unbroken scene of tenderness and beauty from beginning to ending—an anthem of the heart, which fell upon the ear and sank into the spirit with a charm, the force of which no words can convey. And how admirably was the enunciation

of the text adapted to its spirit and significance! The grace and fascination of Helen Faucit's attitudes are without any parallel on the stage; but in this instance they—even they—breathed of that innocence and purity which characterise Iolanthe. The expression of her love for Tristan ought to make the rudest country maiden blush; but how exquisitely pure and delicate did she, in her artless simplicity, make it! In fact, it gave a new and hitherto unknown phase to the passion. In any other hands its avowal, so much at variance with the conventional habits of life, would have excited laughter or disgust. From her lips it proceeded like the innocence of Eve in the garden of Paradise.

"We will mention a fact, however, which may probably have escaped a portion of the audience. It is this. In approaching her father and others, there was not that direct line of motion which characterises those who are in possession of sight,—no, there was the slightest deviation imaginable, such as betrayed that everlasting sense of uncertainty which always attends the motions of the blind. This was beautifully and delicately exhibited, and struck me as one of the finest conceptions in the action of the piece. I have not time, nor perhaps have you space, to enable me to dwell upon the striking points of this inimitable personation. When Tristan wishes to test her want of sight, he asks her how many roses he has in his hand. She replies, 'Give me them, then!' He says, 'Nay, tell me without touching.' '*How can I so?*' she replies. The melancholy beauty, the pathos, the unconscious pathos, with which she pronounces these few syllables were, in effect and power, beyond anything I ever heard, or perhaps ever *was* heard in dramatic representation. When Tristan leaves her, and she stoops down to hear his voice or footsteps as long as she can, there never was anything finer than her attitude, and the beautiful intensity of what she feels. It is not only her ear, but her heart, that is listening; and when she has recovered her sight, and kneels down to express her sense of the *now* perceptible radiance which surrounds her, nothing could surpass the exquisite and pathetic beauty with which she poured forth the appropriate sentiments upon the occasion."

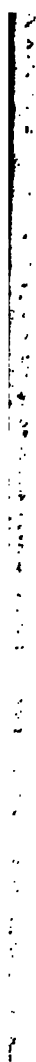
Mr Carleton was a stranger to Lady Martin and to myself, but I had long admired his remarkable power both as a novelist and ballad-writer. His fine appreciation of the way the character of Iolanthe had been made to live upon the

stage, led me to write to him a few words of acknowledgment. In answering my letter he said, after referring to the misgivings with which he had gone to the theatre: "I am very glad, for my own sake, that I went, because in spite of my apprehensions I saw a new page of human genius opened to me, and I may venture to say that Iolanthe herself scarcely enjoyed the wonders, that presented themselves to the new sense which had been restored to or rather conferred upon her, more than I did this wonderful and extraordinary manifestation of character. It was tender, beautiful, fascinating; and although I have read over the play since, in order for the sake of experiment to try its effect upon me again, still I must confess that in my study almost all the charm was gone, and had disappeared with the enchantress herself. This is strictly true, and probably the highest compliment I could pay her."

This recognition of the truth, that to the living interpretation of the actor we sometimes owe as much as to the genius of the author, is of especial value as coming from a man himself gifted with a power of imagination capable of finding in the text of a drama, far more surely than an ordinary reader, what was present to the author's mind in the composition of his work.

Mr Carleton, who, as he says, had made a close study of the character and movements of the blind, did not fail to note how truthfully these were reflected in Lady Martin's impersonation of Iolanthe. He probably thought that these were due to study similar to his own. In this he would not have been singular, for this was the impression prevalent among many close observers. When Lady Martin some years ago played Iolanthe for Mr Irving's Benefit at the Lyceum Theatre, next day Mr Irving called, bringing with him the eminent oculist, the late Mr Critchett. Mr Critchett's object in calling was to learn how Lady Martin had gained the knowledge of the tones, the movements, and generally of the action of persons born blind, which had struck him in the performance of the previous night as true

to the very life. Not slight was his surprise to learn that she had never had any opportunity of watching blind people, and that, as a rule in her art, she had always avoided studying physical defects, or physical pains of any kind. She could always trust to her imagination for all that was necessary to portray these to her audience. In Iolanthe's case she imagined herself to be blind ; her eyes, though open as usual, saw nothing, and if she moved, acted, spoke like a blind person, this was wholly due to the fact that for the time she was practically blind. Everything in her acting which had impressed Mr Critchett so strongly as peculiar to blind people, was simply the spontaneous and unstudied result of what she conceived of the condition and character of Iolanthe.



THE
CAMP OF WALLENSTEIN

BY
FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and titles, including "The Hon. Mr. Justice" and "The Hon. Mr. Justice".

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

IT is a matter of lasting regret, that when Coleridge translated the Second and Third Parts of Schiller's *Trilogy* on the story of Wallenstein, Duke of Friedland, he did not also translate the First Part, to which Schiller attached importance, as an essential prelude to the other two. Coleridge had the MS. supplied to him ; but, according to Professor Brandl (*Life of Coleridge*, Lady Eastlake's Translation, p. 260), he entirely omitted it, because "the short lines puzzled him as much as the broad humour, and he did not want to become prosaic." The explanation is not satisfactory. Coleridge—who better?—could have mastered the short rhyming lines without an effort ; and what is there in the humour of situation or character of this dramatic sketch to puzzle a man so familiar as he was with the humour of Shakespeare and the Elizabethan dramatists, and so thoroughly appreciative of it? The true reason is probably to be found in the small sum, only £100, which, it is now known, was paid to Coleridge for his labours, and in a very natural misgiving as to this part of Schiller's work being acceptable to the prevailing English taste.¹ The reception given to his masterly

¹ The task of translating from Schiller's manuscript appears to have been felt by Coleridge as most irksome. "To-morrow," he writes to his friend Josiah Wedgwood (21st April 1800), "I send off the last sheet of my irksome, soul-wearying labour, the translation of Schiller."

rendering of the finer portions of the Trilogy showed that he had good reason for this misgiving. It fell dead from the press ; caused serious loss to Mr Murray, its publisher—was treated by him as waste-paper ; and only by men who were themselves poets, such as Southey, Campbell, Wordsworth, and, above all, Walter Scott, was it recognised as adding a notable addition to English literature, while enriching the original with passages of exquisite beauty. This judgment time has confirmed. Thanks to Coleridge, no one of Schiller's works is more widely known or admired, wherever English is spoken, than "The Piccolomini" and "The Death of Wallenstein." But without the preliminary "Camp of Wallenstein," a full estimate of the author's conception is impossible. It was intended by Schiller to place the reader in a position at once to realise the state of the European continent at the period in the Thirty Years' War in which the action takes place, and at the same time to understand the conflict of interests which eventuated in the tragic fall of his hero. In the fine Prologue spoken at the production of the first part of the great Trilogy, in October 1798 at the Court Theatre of Weimar, Schiller writes :—

" Right in the heart and turmoil of that war
The poet posts you. Sixteen years have passed
Of devastation, plunder, misery.
In huge tumultuous masses is the world
Fermenting, nor, so far as eye can see,
Glimmers one ray of hope, that peace is near.
Throughout the realm rings the wild clash of arms,
The towns are all mere deserts,—Magdeburg
In ruins,—industry and art are dead.
The burgher's nought, the soldier paramount,
Morals by rampant vice are laughed to scorn,
And savage hordes, in the long war grown wild,
Squat in their rags on the untended soil."

Callot in his "Miseries of War" paints to the eye with appalling truth all, and more than all, that the poet thus

indicates in words. What one of the great camps of the day was—with its licentious bands of mercenaries, drawn from all quarters, heedless of the suffering and ruin which followed their course, the mass attached to their leader by a belief in his destiny, and in the organising power which bound Victory to his chariot-wheels, while others were ready to desert his standard at the call of the Emperor, whom that leader professed to serve—Schiller has painted with great dramatic force, and with a breadth of humour unusual in his works.

“The Camp” was originally written in prose; but on taking up his work after the lapse of some months Schiller decided on turning his prose into iambs, wondering, as he well might, why he had not decided on verse from the first. As he went on with the composition of the drama, it became apparent that it must be subdivided into three parts. The second and thirds parts, forming “The Piccolomini” and “The Death of Wallenstein,” were each sufficient for an evening’s performance. Although neither of these was completed, Goethe was so anxious to open the winter season of the Weimar Theatre, which had been reconstructed and decorated at considerable expense, with a work of importance, that “The Camp,” as the prelude to a drama, of which Goethe had formed the highest expectations, was selected for the purpose. As it stood, it was too short for an evening’s entertainment. It had therefore to be lengthened, and Goethe himself tried to help in lengthening it, but had to give up the attempt. He sent to Schiller, however, a volume of Father Abraham’s “Santa Clara,” and this furnished him with materials for the Capuchin’s Sermon, which formed not the least admirable passage in “The Camp.”

The Prologue, from which a quotation has already been made, was spoken by Herr Vohs, in the costume in which he afterwards played Max Piccolomini. It heralded a new era in German drama, and was in every way so worthy of the noble work, the whole of which was some months after-

wards produced on the stage, that it may be read now with scarcely diminished interest :—

“ The play of art mimetic, gay, and grave,
To which so oft you've lent a willing ear
And eye, your souls surrendering to its sway,
Within this hall invites us once again.
And see ! It has renewed its youth ! And art
Has for art's cheerful temple decked it out,
And a harmonious lofty spirit speaks
To us from this majestic Colonnade,
And stirs the sense with feelings of delight.

“ And yet is this the stage we knew of old,
The cradle of full many a youthful power,
The course where many a bright career was run.
Here are the same old friends, who 'neath your eyes
Have trained themselves with warm untiring zeal.
Here on this spot a noble master¹ stood,
By his creative genius lifting you
Up to the shining peaks his art has scaled.
Oh, may the new worth of this place attract
All that is worthiest into our midst,
And a dear hope, which we have cherished long,
With a resplendent brightness be fulfilled !
A great example makes men emulous,
And to the judgment higher standards brings.
So may this audience, this new stage, stand out
Witness of powers accomplished to the full !
Where, too, might these be better put to proof,
Where freshen to new youth the old renown,
Than here before an audience, choice as this,
Which, sensitive to every magic stroke
Of art, with quick-responsive feeling grasps
Art's soul in its most evanescent form ?

“ For the actor's art, all wondrous as it is,
Upon the mind a fleeting impress makes,
While through the ages live, undimmed by years,
The sculptor's masterpiece, the poet's song.
Dies with the actor's self his magic power,
And while the acclaim still vibrates on his ear,
The moment's swift creation lives no more,

¹ Goethe.

And leaves no record to preserve its fame.¹
Most difficult his art, and its reward
The tribute of a moment ; after-time
Entwines no garland for the actor's brow.
So from the present must he earn his meed,
Fill brimful up the moment that is his,
On hearts that hear him lay a potent hand,
And in the worthiest and best of these
Raise for himself a living monument.
Thus does he by anticipation take
The glory that attends a deathless name ;
For he who gives the best souls of his time,
Thoughts and emotions that enrich their life,
That man has lived for all times yet to come.

" Friends, the new era which Thalia's art
Upon this stage to-day commences, makes
The poet dare, forsaking the old path,
Out from the narrow sphere of burgher-life
To lift you to a higher level, not
Unworthy of the epoch nigh sublime,
In which we move, its struggles and its aims ;
For a great purpose has alone the power
To stir man's being to its deepest depths ;
The soul contracts in a contracted sphere,
Man with the greatness of his aims expands.

" And now, at this our century's earnest close,
When actual life is veined with poetry,
When we before our eyes the conflict see,
Of powerful natures for important ends,
And for the mighty aims that stir mankind,
For mastery and for freedom, men conflict,
Art also dares upon its phantom stage
To try a higher flight, yea, and it must,
Or by life's real stage be put to shame.

" In these our days we see in ruin fall
The old established form, that erewhile gave
To Europe for a century and a half
A welcome peace,—a peace, the precious fruit

¹ " He who struts his hour upon the stage,
Can scarce extend his fame for half an age ;
Nor pen nor pencil can the actor save,
The art, the artist, share one common grave."

—GARRICK. *Prologue to The Clandestine Marriage.*

The Camp of Wallenstein.

Of thirty years of desolating war.
Yet once again the poet's fancy makes
That dark unhappy time before you pass,
With brighter cheer looks on the present time,
And on a future rich with dawning hopes.

“Right in the heart and turmoil of that war
The poet posts you. Sixteen years have passed
Of devastation, plunder, misery.
In huge tumultuous masses is the world
Fermenting, nor, as far as eye can see,
Glimmers one ray of hope, that peace is near.
Throughout the realm rings the wild clash of arms,
The towns are all mere deserts,—Magdeburg
In ruins—industry and art are dead.
The burgher's nought, the soldier paramount,
Morals by rampant vice are laughed to scorn,
And savage hordes, in the long war grown wild,
Squat in their rags on the untended soil.

“On this dark period's background is portrayed
An enterprise of bold o'erbearing pride,
A character too rash to brook control.
You know him,—the creator of brave hosts,
The idol of the camp, the country's scourge,
The mainstay of his Kaiser, and his dread,
Fortune's adventurous son, who, borne aloft
Upon the favouring currents of the time,
Clomb quick to honour's highest pinnacle,
Yet, ever striving on unsatisfied,
The victim of untamed ambition fell.
Blurred by the tints of party love and hate,
His portrait flits confused on history's page.
But art now brings him closer to your eyes
And to your ears, and shows him as he was.
For she who binds and puts a bound on all,
Brings every false extreme to nature back ;
She sees the men by life's dire stress o'erborne,
And of his guilt she lays the larger half
Upon the force of inauspicious stars.

“It is not he, who will upon this stage
Appear to-day. But in the daring troops
His iron will controls, his soul inspires,
Shall you the shadow of his presence feel,
Till the coy muse the courage finds to place
The man himself before you as he lived.

For 'tis his power that perverts his heart,
His camp, his camp alone explains his crime.

“Forgive the poet, then, if he forbear
To sweep you on at once up to the goal
Before him,—neither blame him if he dares
Unroll in pictures only, one by one,
Before your eyes the mighty theme in hand.
Meanwhile let what we play to-night win o'er
Your ear and heart to its unwonted tones;
Conduct you back in yonder far-off days
To that strange theatre of war and strife,
Which with his deeds our hero soon shall fill.

“And if the muse that works for you to-day,
The goddess fancy-free of dance and song,
Her ancient German right, the play of rhyme,
Shall modestly reclaim, oh, blame her not!
Rather give thanks, that she brings smiling in
Truth's darksome image to art's cheerful realm,
Herself dispels the illusion she creates,
Nor craftily palms off her shows for fact.
Serious is life and sad, art gladsome, bright.”

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SERGEANT-MAJOR } of a regiment of Tertzky's Carabineers.
TRUMPETER }
ARTILLERYMAN.
SHARPSHOOTERS.
TWO JÄGERS of Holk's Dragoons.
ARQUEBUSIERS of Tiefenbach's Regiment.
CUIRASSIER of a Walloon Regiment.
CUIRASSIER of a Lombard Regiment.
CROATS.
UHLANS.
RECRUIT.
CITIZEN.
PEASANT.
PEASANT'S SON.
CAPUCHIN.
CAMP SCHOOLMASTER.
SUTLER WOMAN.
SERVANT GIRL.
SOLDIER BOYS.
MUSICIANS.

THE
CAMP OF WALLENSTEIN.

SCENE.

THE CAMP BEFORE PILSEN IN BOHEMIA.

Sutler's tent, with booths. A moving crowd of soldiers of all colours and uniforms. All the tables are occupied. CROATS and UHLANS cooking at a fire. A SUTLER WOMAN serving wine. SOLDIER BOYS throwing dice on a drum-head. Singing in the tent. A PEASANT and his SON advance.

PEASANT'S SON. Father, we'll better be off, I fear,
Out of this rabble of soldiers here.
They're a surly overbearing lot,
And as like to do us a mischief as not.

PEAS. Bah! Who's afraid, boy? They won't eat us,
Though they turn up a little bit rough and beat us.

See yonder new batch of recruits? They're all
Fresh from the banks of the Main and Saal.
They have lots of booty, things rich and rare,
All ours, if deftly we lay our snare.
A captain, through by a comrade stuck,
Left me two dice that had brought him luck.
I'll just have a trial to-day, to see
If their power be as great as it used to be.
To make a poor mouth must be our cue!
They're a happy-go-lucky rollicking crew;
If flattered, they're free with their cash, and so,
As lightly it came, make it lightly go.
If they plunder our goods by the bushel, why,
To regain them in spoonfuls we e'en must try;
With the sword if they ruthlessly hew and hack,
With craft and with wile we must pay them back.

(Singing and shouting from the tent.)

Mercy upon us, how they shout!
And the peasant's skin has to pay for all.
These last eight months this rabble rout
Have harried us out of both bed and stall.
For miles on miles the country round
Nowhere will feather or hoof be found,
All gone, so now for our hungry maw
We have only our own bones left to gnaw.
Things are as bad, ay, worse than when
The Saxons knocked us about like mad,
And yet they call themselves Kaiser's men!

Boy. Here's two of them coming. Not much to be had
Out of them, to judge by their looks.

PEAS.

Oh, they

Are thorough Bohemians, blood and bone,
Of the Carabineers, Count Tertzky's own.
They've been quartered here this many a day.
Of all the lot they are quite the worst.
They strut and they swagger as if they'd burst,
Too high and mighty, as they think,
To join the boor in a stoup of drink.
But yonder, away to the left, I see
Three Riflemen round a fire, and these,
I'd swear by their looks, are Tyrolese.
Come, Emmerich, come! To them will we.
Light-hearted fellows, ready to join
In any fun going, with lots of coin.

Enter SERGEANT-MAJOR, TRUMPETER, *and* UHLAN.

TRUMP. (*to the PEASANT*). What want you here? Clear
out, I say!

PEAS. Kind sirs, a bit and sup! To-day
No morsel has crossed our lips!

TRUMP. Bah! You
Must always be guzzling and swilling, too.

UHL. (*with glass in hand*). Had nothing for breakfast?
Drink, dog, drink!

(*Goes off with the PEASANT to the tent.*)

SERGT. (*to the TRUMPETER*). Was it for nothing, do
you think,

This morning they dealt us double pay?
Only to give us a lark? What next?

TRUMP. You know the Duchess comes here to-day
With the princess, her daughter.

SERGEANT.

A mere pretext !

The troops from foreign parts, that here
At Pilsen find themselves massed, 'tis clear,
Must be won over to share our luck
By lots of liquor and lots of tuck,
That, finding themselves in clover thus,
They may heartily cast in their lot with us.

TRUMP. Ay ! They're at their tricks again, no doubt !

SERGEANT. These generals, commanders, all in full
feather——

TRUMP. What it all means I can't make out.

SERGEANT. That here in such numbers have come
together——

TRUMP. Haven't taken such pains for mere sport.

No, no !

SERGEANT. These whisperings, these messages to and
fro——

TRUMP. Ay, ay !

SERGEANT. And the bewigged old stager

From Vienna, with his gold chain, who's been
Prying all round since yestere'en,
He's not here for nothing, that I'll wager.

TRUMP. Another of their bloodhounds sped
To lead the chase against the Duke.

SERGEANT. Mark me ! They trust us not. They dread
The Friedländer's close brooding look.
He has climbed too high for them, and so
They'd like, if they could, to bring him low.

TRUMP. But we'll uphold him, that will we.
Ah, if all thought like you and me !

SERGEANT. Our regiment, and the other four,

His brother-in-law Count Tertzky's corps,
The stoutest in the camp, are all
Resolved with him to stand or fall.
'Twas himself that brought us here. What's more,
The whole staff of captains were placed by him,
And to him they are bound with life and limb.

Enter a CROAT, with a necklace, followed by RIFLEMAN.

RIFLE. Where did you steal that necklace, Croat?
Will you deal? To you it's not worth a groat.
Take this brace of pistols for it?

CRO. I won't.

You want to cozen me, but you don't!

RIFLE. Well, this blue cap, you shall have that, too.
Only just now in a raffle I won it.
There! Look, how smart! And quite brand-new.

CRO. (*holding up the necklace in the sun*). But this is
all pearls and garnets fine.

How it sparkles, see, when the sun is on it!

RIFLE. (*snatching the necklace*). I'll throw in with the
lot this flask of mine. (*Examining the necklace.*)
All I care for is its sparkle and shine.

TRUMP. Good lord! How he bubbles the Croat!
Absurd!

Half shares, old boy, and mum's the word.

CRO. (*who has put on the cap*). I like your cap.

RIFLE. (*winking to the TRUMPETER*). A bargain, then!
I call you to witness, gentlemen.

Enter ARTILLERYMAN.

ARTIL. (*to SERGEANT*). How goes it, brother Carabineer?

Are we to go on loitering here,
Warming our hands, when the foe so near
His force in the field has already placed?

SERGT. What? In the field? Why all this haste?
The roads are not yet open.

ARTIL. For me,
Most certainly not. This life so free
Is altogether to my taste;
But a scout has come in hot-foot, with news
That Ratisbon has fallen.

TRUMP. The deuce!
Ha! Then we shall soon be jogging, too.

SERGT. Indeed! For the Bavarian, who
Has to our Prince been never true?
Not likely for him we should sweat our fat.

ARTIL. You think so? I'd not be too sure of that.

*Enter two JÄGERS, SUTLER WOMAN, SOLDIER BOYS,
SCHOOLMASTER, SERVANT GIRL.*

FIRST JÄGER. See, see!
We've lighted on jolly good company.

TRUMP. Who are these green-coats? Can you tell?
Smart fellows, and carry themselves right well.

SERGT. Holk's Jägers. That silver lace was ne'er
Honestly come by at Leipzig Fair.

SUT. WOM. Here's luck, and welcome, sirs!

FIRST JÄGER. What! You!
Gustel of Blasewitz! Can this be true?

SUT. WOM. Ay, right you are! And mossoo, I know,
Is long-legged Peter of Itzeho,
Who in one night, on revel bent,
His father's golden ducats spent
At Glückstadt with our regiment.

FIRST JÄGER. And for the rifle dropped the pen.

SUT. WOM. So, so! We are old acquaintance, then?

FIRST JÄGER. And here in Bohemia meet again.

SUT. WOM. To-day here, yonder to-morrow, as war
With its thorny besom from place to place
Sweeps us along at a rattling pace.
Oh, since that day I have wandered far.

FIRST JÄGER. No doubt, no doubt! That's very
plain.

SUT. WOM. I trooped as far up as Temeswar,
Jolting along with the baggage train,
When we hunted the Mansfeldt with might and main.
Before Stralsund a tent I had,
But my business there went all to the bad;
To Mantua with the reliefs I went,
With the de Feria came out again,
And then with a regiment from Spain
I made an excursion as far as Ghent.
Now in Bohemia here am I,
To recover old debts,—at least, I'll try,
If the Duke would but lend me a helping hand,—
And there is my tent at your command.

FIRST JÄGER. Never fear! You'll get every copper,
old girl.

But what have you done with that Scottish churl,
You had in tow with you there?

SUT. WOM. What! He!
The scoundrel! He played a fine trick on me.
Bolted, and took with him all the tin
I had worn myself to the bones to win.
All he left me was this young lazy lout.

(Pointing to the boy.)

SOL. BOY (*running up to her*). Is it father, mammy, you're talking about?

FIRST JÄGER. Well, well, the Kaiser must feed the lad.
Recruits for the army must be had.

SCH. (*coming up*). Off to the camp-school, march !

FIRST JÄGER. He, too,

Has a horror of stuffy rooms, like you.

SERV. GIRL (*entering*). They want to be off, aunt.

SUT. WOM. Coming, straight !

FIRST JÄGER. Ha! Who is this little rogue?

SUT. WOM. Oh, she

Is my sister's child, well-born, sedate.

FIRST JÄGER. A favourite niece—I see, I see.

(*Exit SUTLER WOMAN.*)

SEC. JÄGER (*taking hold of the GIRL*). Stay, pretty maid, with us! Do, now! Stay!

GIRL. Can't! Customers waiting over the way.

(Disengages herself, and exit.)

FIRST JÄGER. That girl is a toothsome morsel, egad!
And that aunt of hers, zounds, I can recall,
How the topping swells of our regiment all
For her comely face would fight like mad.
The heaps of queer people that one has known,

And oh, since then, how the time has flown !

And who can tell what may yet befall ?

(To the SERGEANT and TRUMPETER.)

Your health, sirs ! An we might presume,

We'd be glad to have a place here too.

SERGT. With all my heart, we can make room,

And so to Bohemia welcome you.

FIRST JÄGER. Snug quarters here ! We had sorry fare
In the enemy's country—pinched and spare.

TRUMP. You don't look like it. You're in fine feather.

SERGT. Ay, ay, on the Saal, and in Meissen, too,
They don't speak loudly in praise of you.

SEC. JÄGER. All bosh ! About nothing to make a fuss !
With the Croats it was different altogether ;
'Twas only the gleanings were left for us.

TRUMP. Why, you have a brand-new lace cravat,
And your hose, how handsomely they sit !
And your linen so fine, and your feathered hat,
All speak of the good things on which you lit.
Some folks, 'tis plain, have been in luck's way,
And that is what not one of us can say.

SERGT. But then, as the Duke's own regiment,
Respect and honour are both our due.

FIRST JÄGER. For us, that's a scurvy compliment.
We bear the Duke's name as well as you.

SERGT. Ah, but you belong to the common rout !

FIRST JÄGER. And you're of a special brand, no
doubt !

'Tis only the coat that is different,
And I with my own am well content.

SERGT. Sir Jäger, I'm sorry for you, I own,

To be so mixed up with the boorish scum ;
You only can learn high style and tone,
When close to the General's self you come.

FIRST JÄGER. Small good to you has that teaching
done.

His style of spitting, his style of cough,
Fairly enough you hit them off,
But his genius, his spirit, are not displayed,—
To my thinking, at least,—on the grand parade.

SEC. JÄGER. Look you ! Ask after us where you may ;
Friedland's Wild Huntsmen, the people say !
And we shame not the name, for on we go
Slap-dash through the country of friend and foe ;
Across the seed-field, through the yellow corn—
Well do they know Holk's hunting-horn !
In a moment's flash, be it near or far,
Swift as the deluge, there we are,—
Like flaming fire, that at midnight deep
Sweeps into men's homes, as they're locked in sleep,—
When we come, nor fight nor flight avails.
Order we scoff at, and discipline fails,—
In our sinewy arms both mistress and maid
Are helpless, for war is a ruthless trade.
'Tis no brag ; just ask, and you'll find it truth ;
In Voigtland, Westphalia, and in Baireuth,
Any place where we have but once passed through,—
There children, and children's children too,
When hundreds of years have gone by, and more,
Will be telling of Holk and his Jäger corps.

SERGT. Very like ! But, riot and revel, are they
All that go to make up the good soldier, eh ?

Or the far-seeing eye, the mind, the tact
To perceive the how and the when to act?

FIRST JÄGER. 'Tis freedom makes him! Cut that
stuff!

We've had of that rubbish quite enough.
Fled I from school, and from bookman's lore,
To drudge like a galley-slave at the oar?
Left I the counting-house, desk, and pen,
To meet with them all in the camp again?
No! An idle life and a jolly for me,
Something new every day to see,
Trust frankly to what the moment may bring,
Not one glance backward or forward fling,—
'Twas for this to the Kaiser I sold my skin,
Flung care to the devil, come loss, come win.
Order me where the shot is thickest;
Over the Rhine, at its deepest, quickest,
Where every third man is done for, and I
Will not be the man to shirk or shy,
But, by your leave, about anything more
People mustn't torment me, or worry, or bore.

SERGT. Well, well, if that be all that you lack, it
Is safe to be found 'neath the soldier's jacket.

FIRST JÄGER. What damnable torture and grind we
dree'd

With that plague of his people, Gustavus the Swede!
He made a church of his camp, decreed
Set hours for prayers, neither short nor few,
At morning réveillé and evening tattoo.
And if we'd been going the pace, good lack!
Preached at us himself from his charger's back.

SERGT. A God-fearing gentleman, to be sure !

FIRST JÄGER. The light-heeled hussies he would not stand.

Off to church they must pack, to be wed out of hand ;
So I cut—that was more than I could endure.

SERGT. Things are different there now, I hear say.

FIRST JÄGER. Then to the Leaguers I trotted away,
Who on Magdeburg were preparing to move.
Ah, things ran there in a different groove ;
Revel and mirth were all to the fore,
Wine and wassail, and wenches galore.
By my faith, we had lots of frolic and fun,
For Tilly knew how men's hearts are won ;
He pinched himself, but he left his men
Their swing, without asking the how and when ;
And if on his purse-strings you did not pull,
“Live and let live !” was his motto and rule.
But fortune from Tilly slipped away
After that fatal Leipzig day.
Everything then got out of joint,
Every plan we made somehow missed its point ;
Wherever we showed, wherever we knocked,
Men scowled at us, and doors were locked ;
From place to place we were hustled on,
But the awe we used to inspire was gone ;
So service I with the Saxon took,
For that, I thought, would just suit my book.

SERGT. Well ! And you joined in the nick to share
Bohemia's spoils.

FIRST JÄGER. I did badly there.
Strict discipline was the rule, nor could

We sack and rack as an enemy should.
The Kaiser's castles we had to guard,
To bow and to beck, and to speak by the card.
Warfare like that was a farce, a jest,
A sickly half-hearted business at best ;
A downright rupture they did not want ;
Booty and honour, in short, were scant,
So I soon grew tired, and was minded then
To take to my scrivener's desk again,
When I heard the tuck of Duke Friedland's drum,
Inviting stout hearts to his flag to come.

SERGT. And here how long do you think you'll stay ?

FIRST JÄGER. Pshaw, man ! So long as he rules the
day.

By my soul, I'll stick to him, never fear !
Could a soldier be better off than here ?
Here war is waged, as war should be,
On a scale that is grandly planned and free,
And the soul, that quickens the mass all through,
Sweeps with the force of a driving gale
The meanest trooper along with it, too.
Here I cock my bonnet, and never quail,
Can over your burgher swagger and stride,
Just as Friedland treads down the Princes' pride.
Here things go, as in old times they went,
When all to the might of the sabre bent ;
Here only one crime or offence is known,
'Gainst orders given to kick or groan,
What's not forbidden you're free to do,
And no one asks, " Of what creed are you ? "
In a word, of things there are only two,

What belongs to the army, and what does not,
And I with the colours cast in my lot.

SERGT. Ha, now you speak to the purpose! Good!
Just as a trooper of Friedland's should.

FIRST JÄGER. Not merely official is his command,
A power derived from the Kaiser's hand.
For the Kaiser's service he cares not a rap.
What good has he for the Kaiser won?
With all his vast power, what has he done,
To shield the land from wrong and mishap?
A soldier's kingdom, at that he aims,
For that he would set the world in flames;
For that he would ruthlessly trample down
Order and law, peer, burgher, and clown.

SERGT. Hush, hush! What whirling words are
these?

FIRST JÄGER. What I think I will speak, when and
how I please.
Speech, says the General, speech is free.

SERGT. That's true. He was standing close by me,
And I heard him say it: "Speech is free,
Action is mute, obedience blind!"
These were his very words, I mind.

FIRST JÄGER. I wot not, whether they were or no,
But whatever the words, the fact is so.

SEC. JÄGER. He never has known defeat or shame.
As other men have so often done.
Tilly himself outlived his fame.
But under the Friedländer's flag to fight
Is as good as to say, there's a victory won.
He holds luck bound by a spell of might

To stand fast by him through wrong, through right :
Under his banner who fights, in short,
Has powers at his back of no common sort,
For all the world knows full well,
The Friedländer keeps in his private pay
A devil he's conjured out of hell.

SERGT. Ay, his life is charmed,—no doubt of that.
For all through Lützen's bloody fray
He rode, and never was seen to quail,
Up and down through the fiery hail.
Riddled with bullets was his hat,
The balls they whizzed through boots and cravat,
They left their mark for all to see,
But not e'en a scratch on the skin had he,
Because it was shielded and salved so well
By the ointment he gets from that imp of hell.

FIRST JÄGER. What cock-and-bull stories are these
you tell ?

He wears an elk-skin jacket, and no
Bullet through that could ever go.

SERGT. 'Tis the ointment does it, with wizard spell
From herbs unholy distilled and brewed.

TRUMP. Whatever does it, it can't be good.

SERGT. He reads in the stars, too, so they say,
What's coming, both near and far away.
But I know better, how that betides.
A little grey man to his chamber glides
Through lockfast doors at the dead of night,—
The sentries have many times challenged the wight,—
And something of moment was sure to fall out,
When that little grey doublet was seen about.

Your cit jogs on, all drowze and fag,
In one dull round, like the dyer's nag.
The soldier may rise,—who can tell, how far?—
For nowadays everything's settled by war.
Just look at me! In the coat I wear
The Kaiser's baton, pray, mark, I bear.
All earthly sway, it is meet you know,
Of a surety must from the baton flow;
The sceptre itself in the monarch's hand
Is only a baton, all understand.
Rise to be corporal, then you may deem
Your foot's on the ladder of power supreme,
And you, too, may rise to that great height.

FIRST JÄGER. Provided you only can read and write.

SERGT. This I'll prove to you by a case I know,—
To myself it happened not long ago.
There's Buttler, the chief of our corps, I vow,
Some thirty years back, at Cöln on the Rhine,
He served with me in the ranks of the line,
And they call him major-general now.
How was this? To the front himself he flung,
Till with his exploits the whole world rung;
But my deserts in the background hung.
What's more, e'en Friedland's self, you see,
Our leader—and who has such might as he?—
Whom all men humble themselves before,
Was once a poor noble, and nothing more;
But he threw in his lot with the Goddess of War,
So built up his fortunes to what they are;
Stands next to the Kaiser in honour, and who

Can say what he'll rise to, what miss, what do?
(*With a sly look.*) For the Judgment Day we've not yet
come to.

FIRST JÄGER. He began in a small way, and now is
so great!

For at Altdorf, in his student days,
He indulged,—the truth by your leave to state,—
In rather rollicking madcap ways.
Very early he knocked his famulus down,
On which the gentry of Nürnberg town,
Nothing would stop them, but straight they must
Into jail the young brawler thrust;
It had just been built, and whoever came
Into it first, 'twas to bear his name.
Now, what did he do, the clever rogue?
Why, he lets his poodle run on before;
So to this day they call it after the dog.
By this you can see the wild brain he bore:
Of all our master's great deeds not one
Delights me so much as this stroke of fun.

(*During this speech the SERVANT GIRL has been standing by; the SECOND JÄGER begins toying with her.*)

DRA. Comrade, you drop it! I say no more.

SEC. JÄGER. Why the devil should you thrust in your
oar?

DRA. Drop it, I tell you! The wench is mine.

FIRST JÄGER. The tit-bit yours only? Pooh! All
very fine.

Dragoon, you're demented. All yours, forsooth!

SEC. JÄGER. Wants something, he does, for his private
tooth!

A wench's pretty face must be
To the general camp as sunshine free. (*Kisses her.*)

DRA. (*drags her away*). I say I won't have it. You,
cut and run!

FIRST JÄGER. Huzzah, the pipers! Let's have some
fun!

SEC. JÄGER (*to the DRAGOON*). Do you mean busi-
ness? Well, I'm your man!

SERGT. Peace, masters! He's free to kiss who can!

*Enter Bohemian bagpipers, who play a waltz, first slowly,
then faster and faster. The FIRST JÄGER dances
with the SERVANT GIRL, the SUTLER WOMAN with
the RECRUIT. The GIRL runs off, followed by the
JÄGER, who catches in his arms a CAPUCHIN MONK,
as he enters.*

CAPU. Huzzah! hurroo! and hullabaloo!
Fine doings these, and with me here too!
A Christian army, and these its works?
Are we Anabaptists, or are we Turks?
Making on Sunday such riot and rout,
As if the Almighty had the gout,
And couldn't strike in, to kick you about.
Is this a time to caper and fling,
To spend in debauch and junketing?
Quid hic statis otiosi?
Why stand you with hands in your bosom, when
On the Danube war's Furies are loose again;
When Bavaria's bulwark is broken down,
When the Swede in his clutch holds Ratisbon town?

Yet here in Bohemia the army lies,
Stuffing its paunch, and blinking its eyes,
Bottles, not battles, its chief concern,
Wine-stoup and tabors liked better than sabres,
Drabbing and dicing, grabbing and slicing
Oxen, but skulking from Oxenstiern !
Christendom mourns in sackcloth and ashes,
But the soldier nothing or daunts or dashes,
Things may go better, or things may go worse,
All he thinks of is filling his purse ;
'Tis a time of tears and of loud lament,
Signs and wonders from heaven are sent,
The mantle of war, deep dyed in gore,
Is spread by the Lord the broad heavens o'er,
And from heaven's windows He waves abroad
A comet like an avenging rod.
The world is one great house of wail,
Swimming in blood is the Church's ark ;
And the Roman Empire, God save the mark !
We must now as the Roman Pauper hail.
The rolling Rhine runs blood, not wine,
The cloisters are pillaged, like rifled nests,
The bishoprics turned into desert wastes,
The abbeyes and convents are changed into
Mere dens of a roistering murderous crew,
And all our lands, that were once so blest,
Are now by the wofullest want oppressed.

At whose door, think you, lies the blame ?
That will I tell, to your endless shame.
Take it from me, that it all begins
From your iniquities and sins,

From the horrible heathen life which you
Are leading, you men, and your officers too ;
For sin is the magnet, whose unseen hand
Draweth on iron into the land ;
On ill deeds follow mishap and woe,
As tears to the pungent onion flow ;
On the heels of the U must come the V,
Such is the order of A, B, C.

Ubi erit victoriae spes,
Si offenditur Deus ? That hits the case.
How may any one hope for victory, who
Gives the go-by to mass and to sermon too,
Who does no mortal thing, but stay
In taverns boosing by night and by day ?
The woman in the Evangel found
The penny she lost by looking around ;
Saul found his father's asses again,
And Joseph his brethren, these nice young men ;
But whoso seeks in a camp for the fear
Of God, for a sense of shame or right,
Will not find much of these virtues here,
Though he were to set hundreds of lamps alight.
Even the soldiers, as we in the Gospels read,
To John in the Wilderness made repair,
Gave to the Preacher their willing heed,
And were shrived and baptised too, then and there.
Quid faciemus nos ? asked some.
How may we to Abraham's bosom come ?
Et ait illis : and he replies,
Neminem conculcatis,
Do no man hurt in any wise ;

Nec calumniam faciatis,

Nor to calumny give yourselves, or lies !

Contenti estote, content you alway

Stipendiis vestris, with your pay,

And cursed be drinking, and drabbing, and play !

There is a commandment, "Thou shalt not take
The name of Almighty God in vain ;"

And where is more cursing, or more profane,
Than here at headquarters, to make one quake ?

Why, if for every oath you fling

In the face of heaven with blaspheming tongue,

The bell all round here had to be rung,

There would soon be no sextons left to ring.

And if for every wicked prayer

You out of your unwashed mouths let fall,

There dropped from your poll a single hair,

Ere night 'twould be smooth as an ivory ball,

Ay, though Absalom's locks beside yours were small.

Joshua, of course, was a soldier too ;

King David the giant Goliath slew ;

But where in the Scriptures, Old and New,

Is it written, that they blasphemed like you ?

'Twere just as easy, I should have thought,

To say "God help us !" or "God wot !"

And would answer its purpose quite as well

As to say, "You be damned !" or "You go to hell !"

But what the cask is filled up with, so

With that will it bubble and overflow.

Again, 'tis commanded, "Thou shalt not steal !"

Well, that to the letter you obey,

For you carry things off in the openest way.

From your vulture talons and hawk-like eyes,
 No gold can be hidden, though locked it lies
 In the strongest chest in the strongest room ;
 The calf is not safe in its mother's womb ;
 You take the egg, and the hen that lays it.
Contenti estote. The Preacher says it,
 Therefore content ye to be fed
 With the rations you get of the army bread.
 But wherefore rebuke the servants' sins,
 When the scandal with those he serves begins ?
 As the limbs are, so is the head as well !
 What *he* believes in, who can tell ?

FIRST JÄGER. Sir Priest, you may rail at us, rank and
 file,

But our General, him you shall not revile.

CAPU. *Nē custodias gregem meam !*

An Ahab he is, a Jerobeam,
 That leads men from the one true way
 To heresy and false gods astray.

TRUMP. *and* REC. You'd better stop talking like that,
 I say !

CAPU. A swaggering, blustering braggart he is,
 That intends to make all the strong places his ;
 With his godless mouth he has vowed that he
 Of Stralsund town must the master be,
 Though with chains it were bound to heaven withal.

TRUMP. Will nobody stop his slanderous squall ?

CAPU. A wizard, a raiser of devils, a Saul,
 A Holofernes, a Jehu, abhorred
 For denying, like Peter, his Master and Lord,
 So he cannot abide to hear the cock crow.

BOTH JÄGERS. You've done for yourself by that last blow.

CAPU. A cunning fox of a Herod he !

TRUMP. *and the two JÄGERS (rushing in upon him).*

Shut up ! or a dead man soon you'll be !

CROATS (*interposing to stop them*). Stay where you are, priest ! Never fear !

Finish up your sermon ! We want to hear.

CAPU. (*raising his voice*). A proud Nebuchadnezzar from head to foot,

A heretical father of lies, to boot !

He goes by the name of Wallenstone,

And truly he is to us all a stone

Of offence and stumbling, and that alone ;

And in Friedland there ne'er can be peace indeed,

Till of Friedland's self the land is freed.

(While speaking these last words, raising his voice as he speaks, he has been gradually moving away, while the CROATS keep the rest of the soldiers from getting at him.)

FIRST JÄGER (*to the SERGEANT*). What he meant by the cock, I'd like to know,

Makes the General shake, when he hears it crow.

'Twas meant, eh ? in scorn and ridicule solely ?

SERGT. There I can help you. No, not wholly.

By birth the General's rather queer,

He has an especially sensitive ear,

He's clean upset, if a cat but mew,

And if a cock crows, it makes him grue.

FIRST JÄGER. The lion in that is the same as he.

SERG. Mouse-quiet must everything round him be.

This rule the sentries have all to keep ;
He has things to think of so many and deep.

VOICES (*heard in the tent: uproar*). Seize him, the
rascal ! The rogue, to try it !

PEAS. (*heard from the tent*). Help ! Mercy ! Help !

OTHER VOICES. Stand back ! Be
quiet !

FIRST JÄGER. Deuce take me, yonder there's fighting
afoot !

SEC. JÄGER. Then I'll be in it.

(*The JÄGERS exeunt into the tent, as the
SUTLER WOMAN comes from it.*)

SUT. WOM. The thief, the brute !

TRUMP. Hilloa, dame ! What's put you in such a
heat ?

SUT. WOM. The scoundrel, runagate, cut-purse, cheat !
In my tent that this should have come to pass !

To shame me before all the camp ! Alas !

SERGT. Gossip, what's up ?

SUT. WOM. Oh, such a row !

They caught a rascal peasant just now,
With the loaded dice on him, by which he won.

SERGT. And here they are bringing him, with his son.

Enter SOLDIERS, dragging in the PEASANT.

FIRST JÄGER. He must swing !

SHARPSHOOTERS *and* DRAGOONS. To the Provost !
Bring him along !

SERGT. Doom follows fast on the heels of wrong.

SUT. WOM. In an hour he'll be capering in the air.

SERGT. An evil trade brings evil pay.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER. This comes of driving men to despair.

For, look ye, we ruin them first, so they
Betake them to stealing, and well they may.

TRUMP. How! What? Speak up for him? The
cur!

Has the devil set all your wits astir?

FIRST AR. Well, the boor is a man—in a sort of way.

FIRST JÄGER. Don't mind them. They're some of
Tiefenbach's corps;

Sons of tailors and glovers, that's what they are.

At Brieg they saw barrack life,—nothing more.

What should they know of the ways of war?

Enter CUIRASSIERS.

FIRST CUIR. Peace! Why are you knocking the
boor about?

FIRST SHA. A swindling knave! Caught cheating at
play.

FIRST CUIR. And has cheated you to some purpose,
eh?

FIRST SHA. He has. Yes, thoroughly cleaned me out.

FIRST CUIR. How? You, sir, you a Friedländer's
man,

And could let yourself so very far down

As to try your luck with a boorish clown!

(*To the PEASANT.*) Run, fellow! Be off as fast as you
can.

(*PEASANT runs away, the others draw together.*)

FIRST AR. He makes short work—he is firm as steel.
The right way that with such folk to deal.
Where hails he from? No Bohemian he.

SUT. WOM. A Walloon. A man to respect, you see.
A Pappenheim cuirassier, I trow.

FIRST DRA. (*advancing*). The young Piccolomini
leads them now!

On the field of Lützen him they took
For colonel, did it off their own hook,
When Pappenheim fell in the mêlée there.

FIRST AR. A step so venturous did they dare?

FIRST DRA. This regiment is exceptional quite.
It never was foremost in the fight,
It has rules of its own by which to steer,
And the Friedländer holds it especially dear.

FIRST CUIR. (*to his comrade*). Can the news be true?
How was it heard?

SEC. CUIR. I have it upon our Colonel's word.

FIRST CUIR. We're not their dogs, to be treated thus.

FIRST JÄGER. What's wrong there? They seem to
be much put out.

SEC. JÄGER. Is it anything, masters, that touches us?

FIRST CUIR. Something you'll none of you smile about.
(SOLDIERS *gather round him.*)

They to the Netherlands want to lend us,
Jägers, cuirassiers, riflemen,
Eight thousand strong they propose to send us.

SUT. WOM. What! Off on the trot there once again!
'Twas only yesterday I got back.

SEC. CUIR. (*to the DRAGOONS*). You Buttler's men
must saddle too.

FIRST CUIR. And we Walloons are told off with you.

SUT. WOM. The very best squadrons of all the pack !

FIRST CUIR. We have to escort him from Milan.

FIRST JÄGER. The Infanta? Maddening! Such a man !

SEC. JÄGER. That swindling priest ! The devil and all !

FIRST CUIR. What ! Leave the Friedländer, the best,
The kindest of generals to his men,
To take with the Spaniard the field again,
The skinflint, whom we in our hearts detest !
No, that won't work. We shall rather bolt.

TRUMP. The deuce ! To be led by that priest-ridden dolt !

We sold our blood to the Kaiser, that
We did, but not to the Spanish red hat.

SEC. JÄGER. 'Twas on Friedland's word and credit, in fine,

That we took troopers' service, and
But for our love for the Wallenstein,
He'd never have got us, this Ferdinand.

FIRST DRA. Did Friedland not make us the troops we are ?

We shall steer, shall we not, by his fortune's star ?

SERGT. Steady, friends, steady ! To me give ear.
Talking will be of no service here.

I see a bit farther than any of you.

There's a trick in all this, and a dark one too.

FIRST JÄGER. Stand at attention ! All be still !

SERGT. First, gossip Gustel, for me fill

A nip of good liquor, to wet my throat,
And then you shall hear what I'd have you note.

SUT. WOM. (*serving out*). Here it is, Master Sergeant.

You gave me a fright.

Things won't be so bad, eh,—not ruinous quite?

SERGT. Look, sirs, 'tis right that every man
On what's under his nose should form his plan;
Still we must, as our General used to say,
Look about us, and things as a whole survey.
The Friedländer's troops is the name we bear;
The burgher, he quarters us everywhere,
Warms us and feeds us, and makes us good cheer;
The boor, he must yoke his horse and steer
To haul our baggage-waggons, although
He kick ever so much against doing so.
Let a corporal only with some seven men
Be seen riding on to a village, why then
He is owned as chief magistrate there, and may
Make every soul his commands obey.
Yet, confound them! they like us not, not they,
And rather would see the devil's own face,
Than our buff jerkins about the place.
Thunder and 'ounds! why don't they chase
Us out of the country, since that's the case?
In numbers they're more than our match, the knaves,
And if we have swords, they have their staves.
To laugh at them, then, why are we able?
Because, massed as we are, we are formidable!

FIRST JÄGER. Ay, ay! In the mass, the power lies
there.

Duke Friedland made proof that this was so

When he raised for the Kaiser,—some eight years ago
Or nine,—this great army from everywhere.
Of only twelve thousand at first would they hear ;
These, he said, I can never feed ;
But give me sixty, and then, indeed,
Of their starving I'll have not the slightest fear.
And so we became soldiers of Wallenstein.

SERGEANT. For example, from this right hand of mine
Chop a finger, one of the five I own,
Though it were but the little one, do you opine,
That you've taken that finger, and that alone ?
No, by Jove ! with my hand you have played the deuce !
'Tis only a stump, of no further use.
Now, these eight thousand horse, which they
To Flanders purpose to draft away,
Are the army's little finger. Yes !
Do you flatter yourselves, if them we lose,
That our force is only one-fifth the less ?
No, bless you ! A general smash ensues.
Away go respect, awe, terror, too,
The boor's cockscorn swells up anew.
In the Vienna Chancery they'll prepare
Our billets for us, and prescribe our fare,
And we'll be poor beggars, as once we were.
And how long it will be, say, who can tell,
Ere they take our General away as well ?
He's not in high favour at Court, and then
We should all be clean done for, gentlemen.
Who then would help us to get our pay,
Or see that they kept to our contracts, eh ?
Who has the brain, the nerve to command,

The quick keen eye, and the resolute hand,
 This hotch-potch army to keep in control,
 And weld it together in one great whole?
 Now, by way of example, speak, Dragoon,
 What might your native country be?

FIRST DRA. I am from Ireland, far over the sea.

SERGT. (*to the two CUIRASSIERS*). You, sir, I know,
 are a Walloon ;

A Lombard you, we can tell by your tongue.

FIRST CUIR. Who am I? That's what I could never
 find out ;

I was stolen, when I was so very young.

SERGT. You also don't hail from hereabout.

FIRST AR. From Buchau I, on the Federstrand.

SERGT. Neighbour, and you?

SEC. AR. From Switzerland.

SERGT. (*to SECOND JÄGER*). And what is your mother
 country, Jäger?

SEC. JÄGER. Hard by Wismar my parents dwell.

SERGT. (*pointing to the TRUMPETER*). And he there
 and I, we come from Eger.

Now, I put it to you, could any one tell,
 That we from North and from South were so
 Together drifted, like flakes of snow?
 Do we not look, as though our whole stock
 Were all chipped out of the self-same block?
 Against the foe do we not stand fast,
 Like metal in one mould run and cast?
 Do we not fit in together, clean
 As the teeth of the wheels of some great machine?
 And who has welded us all so well,

That one from another no man can tell?

Who, who, but he, the Wallenstein?

FIRST JÄGER. It would never have struck this pate of mine,

How we came to fit in so well as we seem ;

I was always content to float with the stream.

FIRST CUIR. That's quite my view—the Sergeant's right.

Fain would they strike at the army's might,

So they'd keep us soldiers down, that they

Alone may have sovereign rule and sway.

Yes, 'tis a conspiracy, a plot!

SUT. WOM. Conspiracy! God grant, 'tis not!

I'll not get a rap of what's due to me.

SERGT. Just so. All round 'twill be bankruptcy.

Lots of the captains and generals too,

In order to raise their regiments, drew

From their private coffers the needful cash;

They wanted, moreover, to cut a dash,

So greatly beyond their means they went,

In hopes to make profit on what they spent.

But they'll lose every stiver, yes, one and all,

If their leader, and ours, the Duke, should fall.

SUT. WOM. I'll be ruined, O Lord, and to such an amount!

Half the army is down in my books. The Count

Isolani, that bad paymaster, is here

Two hundred dollars at least in arrear.

FIRST CUIR. Now, comrades all, what's to be done?

One course can serve us, and only one.

United they cannot harm us; our plan

Is to stick together, then, all as one man.
Let them issue their orders! Here we stand,
Rooted fast in Bohemian land.
We'll not march out of it anyhow.

The soldier fights for his honour now.

SEC. JÄGER. We'll not be driven round the country so.
Let them come, and that they shall quickly know!

FIRST AR. Good sirs, mind what you're after. This
The Kaiser's wish and order is.

TRUMP. Oh, much for the Kaiser do we care!

FIRST AR. Don't say that again! You had best be-
ware.

TRUMP. But what I said is the simple fact.

FIRST JÄGER. True! I've always been given to un-
derstand,

That the Friedländer here has sole command.

SERGT. So he has! 'Twas the bargain he made, and
pact;

He has absolute power, you must be told,
To carry on war, to conclude a peace;
He can confiscate any man's gear and gold,
Can hang and can pardon, with power of police,
Can make officers, colonels even,—in short,
No honour, but he has authority for't.
And this he has under the Kaiser's hand.

FIRST AR. The Duke is able, a man for command,
But what is he else, come great come small,
But the Kaiser's servant, as we are all?

SERGT. As we! You are greatly mistaken. He
Is a prince of the Empire, direct and free,
No better Bavaria's self can be.

Did these eyes not see,—you'll believe me now,—
When I was on guard at Brandeis, how
The Kaiser allowed him in presence there
His hat on his princely head to wear!

FIRST AR. That was for Mecklenburg, we may sur-
mise, sir,
Which then he held in pawn from the Kaiser.

FIRST JÄGER (*to the SERGEANT*). How! Even in
the presence he wore his hat?
There's something uncommonly strange in that.

SERGT. (*feeling in his pocket*). If my word you doubt,
in what I've told,
Here is something to prove it, your hand can hold.
(*Showing a coin.*)

Whose image and superscription is this?

SUT. WOM. Show me! A Wallenstein piece it is.

SERGT. There you have it! Can anything clearer be?
What Prince is more of a Prince than he?
Don't he coin his own money, like Ferdinand?
Has he not his own subjects, and his own land?
Is he not as his Highness by all men known?
Has he not, then, the right to have troops of his own?

FIRST AR. That right will by nobody be denied;
But we're to the Kaiser by duty tied,
And the Kaiser it is who pays us.

TRUMP. What!
There in your teeth I say you lie.
The Kaiser it is who pays us not.
Is it not now forty weeks gone by,
That they've kept on promising day by day,
But not a rap have we seen of our pay?

FIRST AR. 'Tis in very good hands, we may suppose !

FIRST CUIR. Peace, masters, peace ! Would you
come to blows ?

What madness is this, to be quarrelling so,

As to whether the Kaiser's our master or no ?

Why, 'tis just because it's our pride to show,

That we must be treated with due respect

As his trusty troopers, that we object

To be shifted and shunted wherever he wants,

At the nod of priests and of sycophants.

Say yourselves, is it not for your master's gain,

That his soldiers their dignity should maintain ?

Who but they can raise and uphold his state,

As that of a mighty potentate ?

Can make throughout Christendom far and near

His word felt as something for men to fear ?

Let those submit to his yoke and thrall,

To whom the bulk of his favours fall.

We, who in none of his splendours share,

Toil only is ours, hard blows, hard fare,

And the pride that within our hearts we bear.

FIRST JÄGER. Every great tyrant, and every great
Kaiser,

Saw things in that light, and were very much wiser.

All others they worried, and taxed, and oppressed,

But took care that their soldiers should have of the best.

FIRST CUIR. The soldier must be to his worth awake.

If he plies not his craft with a noble aim,

He'd better keep out of it. In the game,

If I am to play with my life for stake,

I must count for something, or in the strife

I become a mere butcher, like your born
Croât, and look down on myself with scorn.

BOTH JÄGERS. Yes, honour is more, much more than
life !

FIRST CUIR. The sword is neither a spade nor plough.
'Twere folly to till with it anyhow.

For us there ripens nor corn nor grass ,
Homeless, the soldier is doomed to pass
From country to country far and wide ;
Warm himself he may not at his own fireside ;
Away from fair cities he needs must roam,
Away from the sports of the village green,
Away from the vintage, the harvest home ;
These are only by him from the distance seen.
Let him lose his self-respect, and then
What's left him to boast of, gentlemen ?
He must have something to call his own,
Or back on mere murder and rapine be thrown.

FIRST AR. 'Tis a wretched, wretched life, God wot !

FIRST CUIR. And yet for another I'd change it not.
I have been round the world a deal, and had
Experience of all sorts, good and bad ;
I've served in my time the King of Spain,
With the Venice Republic have service ta'en,
Also with the kingdom of Napoli,
But none of them all brought luck to me.
With merchant, too, and knight I've been,
Of craftsman and Jesuit taken note,
But of all the doublets that I have seen,
None pleased me so much as my own steel-coat.

FIRST AR. Well, so much as that I can scarcely say.

FIRST CUIR. Who wants in this world to make his way,
 Must be stirring and worrying night and day ;
 To place and high honours whoever would tend,
 'Neath the golden load his back must bend ;
 Whoe'er would enjoy a father's blessing,
 And his children's and children's children's caressing,
 Some honest trade let him calmly ply ;
 But no mind for that sort of thing have I.
 Free would I live, and would die as free,
 Will rob no man, will be no man's heir,
 And down from my nag look, all devil-may-care,
 On the hurly-burly under me.

FIRST JÄGER. Bravo ! My sentiments to a T.

FIRST AR. To you, then, it seems the best of jokes
 To ride roughshod over other folks ?

FIRST CUIR. The times are hard : nor is the sword
 With justice always in strict accord,
 But let no one say that the fault is mine,
 If I somewhat to the sword incline.
 Humane in war I would gladly be,
 But I'll not let any one drum on me.

FIRST AR. Who is to blame but we soldiers—yes, we,
 That the people are sunk in such misery ?
 This wretched war, with its want and woe,
 Is like into sixteen years to go.

FIRST CUIR. Brother, all men cannot in one note
 praise
 The dear God above us, and His ways.
 One wants the sun, it makes others fret,
 This wants dry weather, and that wants wet.

Where you see nothing but want and woe,
Life seems to me all sunshine and glow.
If boors and burghers are made to smart,
I really pity them from my heart ;
But I can't mend matters ; 'tis like when we
Are ordered to charge the enemy.
Away with a snort our chargers rush,
No matter what lies in their way to crush ;
Be it brother, or son, my very own,
My soul may be rent by his agonised groan,
But on I must dash o'er his body, nor stay
One moment to carry him out of the fray.

FIRST JÄGER. Ay, mind number one, that's the only
way !

FIRST CUIR. And since it so happens, that for the
while

The soldier is favoured by fortune's smile,
Let us clutch with both hands the goods she sends ;
Our day will be short, for we have no friends.
Of a sudden a peace will be hurried on,
And then is our occupation gone ;
Out packs the soldier, in stalks the boor,
And all will be then as it was of yore.
Now here we are still a united band,
And here we have still the upmost hand ;
But once let our ranks be broken, I'll swear,
We shall soon be starving on Lenten fare.

FIRST JÄGER. No, that must never be. Let us
Stand all as one man united thus !

SEC. JÄGER. Yes ! Let us be one ! 'Tis the proper
thing !

FIRST AR. (*taking out his leathern purse*). Well, mistress, how much have we got to pay?

SUT. WOM. Oh, a trifle scarcely worth mentioning.
(*They settle.*)

TRUMP. It's a right good job that you're going away. You'd only make mischief, were you to stay.

(*Exeunt ARQUEBUSIERS.*)

FIRST CUIR. I'm sorry. They are else good fellows enough.

FIRST JÄGER. But to talk such pitiful puling stuff!

SEC. JÄGER. Now we're here by ourselves, let us think how we are

This new device best to meet and mar.

TRUMP. How best! Why, simply refuse to stir.

FIRST CUIR. No, nothing that is against discipline, sir. Let each of us now to his corps away, And the matter before his comrades lay, And show them the reasons, why we are Resolved we shall not be moved off so far. I'll answer for my Walloons. They'll do Exactly as I do through and through.

SERGT. Count Tertzky's regiment, horse and foot, To a man, I'll be sworn, will follow suit.

SEC. CUIR. (*posting himself beside the first*). Lombard and Walloon stick side by side.

FIRST JÄGER. Freedom's the Jäger's life and pride.

SEC. JÄGER. Freedom must rest upon might, so I With Wallenstein shall live and die.

FIRST SHA. The man of Lorraine with the tide will swim;

Where sport's to be had you are sure of him.

DRA. Success is the Irishman's guiding star.

SEC. SHA. Tyrolese follow only their liege lord in war.

FIRST CUIR. So therefore let every regiment
Write out a memorial, and plainly say,
That here together we mean to stay,
That neither force nor craft, away
From Friedland shall drive us soldiers of his,
Who to us a very father is.
Hand this, with profound respect, when done,
To Piccolomini,—I mean the son,—
Who's right well up to this sort of thing.
With Duke Friedland he just what he likes can do,
And he stands in the highest favour, too,
At Court with the Kaiser and the King.

SEC. JÄGER. Come, stick to that text! Let us all
agree!

Piccolomini shall our spokesman be.

ALL TOGETHER. Piccolomini shall our spokesman be!
(*Are about to leave.*)

SERGT. A glass, friends, before you go, with me!
Here's a health to the Piccolomini!

SUT. WOM. (*fetches a flask*). No scores for this! 'Tis
free to you all,

And the best of good luck your plan befall!

CUIR. The soldier shall rule the day!

BOTH JÄGERS. The peasant shall pay!

DRAGOONS *and* SHARPSHOOTERS. The army shall
flourish, you'll see!

TRUMP. *and* SERGT. And Friedland shall its com-
mander be!

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*sings*).

Up, comrades, to horse! Up, saddle and mount!

To the field! What shall we be afraid of?

There still doth a true man for something count,

There his heart shows what mettle it's made of.

No other for him can answer there,

All alone by himself he must do and dare.

(*Whilst he is singing, the SOLDIERS advance from
the background and sing in chorus*)—

No other for him can answer there,

All alone by himself he must do and dare.

DRAGOON.

From the earth fair freedom away has flown,

We see but the master and mastered,

And falsehood and cunning, they triumph alone

In a world grown slavish and dastard.

Who has to look death in the face, and can,

The soldier alone is the true free man!

Chorus.

Who has to look death in the face, and can,

The soldier alone is the true free man!

FIRST JÄGER.

The troubles of life he daffs aside,

Of care he recks nothing, nor sorrow,

To encounter his fate he will boldly ride,

If it come not to-day, 'twill to-morrow,

And if to-morrow, why then to-day
With his lass and his glass let him sport and play.
*(Chorus as before. The glasses
are replenished.)*

SERGEANT.

They drop down from heaven, his pleasant gains,
Without either straining or struggle,
The farmer out of earth's bosom strains
His pitiful pittance to juggle.
He digs and he shovels, till life is past,
And digs till he digs his own grave at last.
(Chorus as before.)

FIRST JÄGER.

A dreaded guest is the trooper tall,
With his swift horse swiftly ridden.
When the lamps are bright in the bridal hall,
He comes to the feast unbidden ;
He woos not with vows, he woos not with gold,
But bears off the bride like a reiver bold !
(Chorus as before.)

SECOND CUIRASSIER.

Why weeps the wench ! The soldier must roam ;
Let him push on ahead and forget her !
He has upon earth no abiding home,
His fancy no true love can fetter.
He is kept on the move by his restless lot,
His heart may be touched, but he loses it not.
(Chorus as before.)

FIRST JÄGER (*takes the two next him by the hand; the others do the same, and all form a semicircle*).

Then up, comrades, up! To the field away!

There a man may breathe freely and lightly.

Youth boils in your veins, life bubbles up gay,

• Up, then, while it sparkles still brightly!

Who fears to venture his life on a throw,

What life is that craven will never know.

(Chorus as before.)

(The curtain falls while they are yet singing.)

THE
GLADIATOR OF RAVENNA

A TRAGEDY

BY
FRIEDRICH HALM
(BARON VON MÜNCH BELLINGHAUSEN)

“Den menschen macht sein Wille gross und klein !
Im engen Kreis verengert sich der Sinn ;
Es wächst der Mensch mit seinen grössern Zwecken.”
—SCHILLER.

“ 'Tis by our will that we are small or great !
In a contracted sphere the mind contracts ;
Enlarge his aims, the man grows larger too.”

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THIS play was produced anonymously at the Burg Theater of Vienna, in October 1854. It was then, and for a long time afterwards, ascribed to a certain Dr Laube, when suddenly the authorship was claimed by a Bavarian school-master, named Friedrich Bacherl, who alleged that in the play, which was then creating a *furor* throughout Southern Germany, he recognised the substance of a drama which he had some years before submitted to the director of the Burg Theater, and which had been returned by that gentleman as unfit for the stage. Great was the ferment which ensued, and in Munich the production of the piece led to something as like an O.P. riot as, under the limitations of Bavarian liberty, was possible. The controversy appears to have ended, as others of the same kind have ended, in the claims of both Laube and Bacherl breaking down; for in 1856 the play took its place, without one word of comment, in the collected edition of Friedrich Halm's works. It certainly has a sufficient family resemblance to its companions to establish Halm as its author.

The story of the play has evidently been suggested by two sentences of Tacitus. In his mention of the first defeat inflicted upon the army of Arminius by Germanicus, when he entered Germany to avenge the signal overthrow of Varus

in the Teutoburger Forest by the great German leader, that brilliant word-painter records that, among the prisoners then taken,—

“Inerant fœminæ nobiles ; inter quas uxor Arminii, eademque filia Segestis, mariti magis quam parentis animo, neque victa in lacrimas, neque voce supplex, compressis inter sinum manibus, gravidum uterum intuens.”—*Ann.*, i. 57.

Arminius's wife, whose name was Thusnelda, soon after being taken to Rome to swell the triumph of Germanicus, gave birth to a son, who, according to Strabo, was called Thumelicus, and of him Tacitus says, “educatus Ravennæ puer, quo mox ludibrio conflictatus sit, in tempore memorabo.” The lost books of the ‘Annals’ no doubt contained the fulfilment of the promise here given, but of this son nothing further is known historically. Enough, however, is suggested in the words just quoted for the purposes of the dramatist, who, availing himself of the facts that a woman of the character indicated, the wife of the great German hero, gave birth in captivity to a son, and that this son was trained as a gladiator at the school of Ravenna, and actually made his appearance in the arena, has constructed a play full of life, and action, and interest.

Suetonius has supplied the author with the crude materials for his masterly portraiture of Caligula. The indications furnished by Suetonius as to the characters of Cæsonia, Cassius Chærea, and others of the personages who figure in the play, have also been turned to account with great dramatic skill.

Appealing to national sentiment so strongly as it does, it would have been strange had this play failed to meet with an enthusiastic reception on its first production. But its success could not have been assured, had it not fallen into the hands of performers able to sustain the many strongly drawn characters, each of whom forms a distinctive feature in the play. Fortunately for the author, his utmost desires on this point seem to have been gratified. Vienna was at

that period happy in the possession of a great actress—Julia Rettich. On her the part of Thusnelda devolved, a part demanding not only a noble and commanding presence and deportment, and a voice at once tender and resonant, capable of doing justice to the powerful blank verse which is put into Thusnelda's mouth, but also the fine sensibility and strongly sympathetic imagination which could assimilate the feelings and give forth the language of the poet with the spontaneous energy of a fresh inspiration. How complete was her success may be divined from the fact that the play was dedicated to Madame Rettich by the author, "in respectful homage," and that he prefixed to it the following sonnet—a tribute no less honourable to himself than to her, in the frank avowal which it makes, that his creation was ennobled in her hands:—

TO JULIA RETTICH.

"Aims that are noble fate doth still befriend;
Even as, when mazed in trackless wilds and drear,
The traveller sees some friendly soul appear,
Comfort and help at sorest need to lend.
So I beheld thee on my path descend,
Nurse my first shoots of song, and when in fear
I gave them to the crowd, thou didst ensphere
My dream in form, and with thy being blend.
I gave the words; thou didst with life complete,
With grace's witchery, and the glow of truth;
And as I lay in homage at thy feet
My work, great Artist, 'tis my thought that then
I pay no votive tribute, but in sooth
Give only back thy gift to thee again."

Of the many plays written by the Baron von Münch Bellinghausen—the real name of Friedrich Halm—this is the best. Next to it may be ranked his "*Sohn der Wildniss*," which, under the name of "*Ingomar*," has been for many years a favourite on the English stage, in a translation which, unfortunately, preserves little of the poetic charm of the original.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAIUS CÆSAR CALIGULA.

CÆSONIA, his wife.

CASSIUS CHÆREA, Prefect } of the Prætorian Guard.

CORNELIUS SABINUS, Tribune }

CAIUS PISO, } Senators.

TITUS MARCIUS, }

FLAVIUS ARMINIUS, } Roman Knights.

GALLUS, }

VALERIUS, }

THUSNELDA, } prisoners in Rome.

RAMIS, her kinswoman, }

MEROVIG.

GLABRIO, head of the School of Gladiators at Ravenna.

LYCISCA, a flower-girl, his daughter.

THUMELICUS, }

KËYX, } Gladiators.

GNIPHO, }

APEX, }

CÆLIUS, gate-keeper.

Senators, Roman Knights, Freedmen, Gladiators, Slaves,
Female Slaves, Guards.

SCENE—*Rome.*

THE
GLADIATOR OF RAVENNA.

ACT I.

Hall in the gardens of Marc Antony. Arcades in the background ; through the central arcade, over which a curtain is suspended, the garden is seen ; doors right and left. In the walls of the hall, niches with statues on high pedestals, on the steps of which, as well as under the arcades, a number of gladiators are disposed in picturesque groups. On the pedestal of the foremost statue, R., THUMELICUS—on that of the foremost statue, L., KÉYX, APEX, and GNIPHO.

Enter CÆLIUS and GLABRIO (L.H.)

CÆL. I tell you, it can't be.

GLAB.

Best, have a care !

I am Glabrio, look you,—Glabrio, the head

Of the Ravenna Gladiator-school.

And Caius Cæsar sent me his command

To bring my troop, the picked ones of the lot,
 To Rome, for the great fight comes off to-morrow ;
 So I have brought them, as I used to do,
 Here to the gardens of Marc Antony,
 Where they may be well cared for and well fed.
 And now you come and tell me, "It can't be!"
 I tell you, I won't stand it!

CÆL. Hark awhile!
 It can't be *here*, here in the left wing. This
 Is used as the State prison; that is why
 The right wing's been got ready for your use.
 Here, should there be occasion, we'll arrange
 A quiet spot for you.

GLAB. Indeed! indeed!
 In the right wing! It seems I've lost my way!
 And this wing here, you say—Now, by my troth,
 A queer State prison! Open doors all round,
 And sentries nowhere!—Is it empty, then?

CÆL. (*pointing to the right*). In there two German
 women have been living
 This many a year, not under strict restraint;
 They're free to stir about in-doors, or in
 The gardens, unattended, as they please;
 And so you comprehend——

GLAB. Ay, ay, all right!
 My lads and I must to the other side!

CÆL. Where are they?
 GLAB. Yonder, under the arcades;
 And on the steps there, stretching their tired
 limbs,
 Just anywhere and anyhow they can,

And look, what limbs they are—

(*Giving GNIPHO a kick where he lies.*)

Up, Gnipho, up!

Stretch out your arm! There's sinew for you,
look!

And what a chest!—(*striking it with the palm of his hand.*)

All sound, rings like a bell!

A splendid pair these, he and Këyx here,—

Oh, he's a second Hercules, in fact

King of my troop, that soars above the rest

As your hawk soars above a flight of crows.

THUMELICUS (*springing up and muttering to himself.*)

Lie, lie away until you choke yourself!

GLAB. And yonder lad. Come here, Thumelicus!

Just look at this young fellow. Ain't he now

A clipper? Two-and-twenty years of age,

Handsome as Phœbus, fresh as any rose!

Won't he set all the women in a flutter,

Won't there be making eyes and catching breath,

When he appears on the arena!

KËYX (*aside*).

Pimp!

GLAB. What say you? Have I not for Cæsar
reared

A batch of stalwart springalds?

CÆL.

That you have!

Quite first-rate goods! But now come in with me,

And to the tribune show yourself, that he

May tell the Cæsar you've arrived.

GLAB.

All right!

But first, before I have to trot them out,

Let my lads have their breakfast and a bath!

All in the way of pastime for yourselves ?
 The Circus is the market you are meant for,
 Ay, there, and nowhere else ! Bear that in mind,
 And now be off to the right wing, ye knaves !
 Away with you ! Begone !

*(The gladiators, all but KĒYX and THUMELICUS,
 retire up slowly, and exeunt L.)*

Do you hear, Kēyx ? *(Striking him.)*

KĒYX.

Ay,

You strike me, but this fellow, who began
 The fray, goes off scot-free ! Well, he shall pay
 for't !

Fresh Rose, to our next meeting in the Circus !

(Retires up, and exit L.)

THUM. *(springing after him).* The Circus ! yes, you
 insolent braggart——

GLAB. *(seizing him by the hand and coming forward
 with him).* Stay !

Stir not an inch ! What was it all about ?

Why, son of mine, you're quite upset ?

THUM.

If you

Have ever truly cared about me, now,
 Now is the time to show it ; let me meet
 This Kēyx front to front in the next match !

GLAB. H'm ! Kēyx ! Why, the knave has seen
 blood flow,

He's bold and sturdy, master of his weapon !

THUM. A Hercules, no doubt. Soars o'er us all
 As a hawk soars above a flight of crows.
 King of our troop ? It may be that he is,
 But if he is, I shall not live, not I !

GLAB. Tush, madcap! What a fuss about mere words?

Is not a merchant bound to praise his wares?
You fight as well, as true to rule, as he,
And, if he's stronger, you are more adroit!
So hug your own deserts, and grant him his!

THUM. He spoke ill of Lycisca, and shall die!

GLAB. Spoke ill of her? Why, man, this only shows,
She doesn't care for him! Don't vex yourself
About such silly trash! And, by the by,
Lycisca follows us.

THUM. To Rome? Lycisca?

GLAB. She's off with Marcus Bibius—you know—
Her friend that was, and now to Rome she comes
To push her fortune.

THUM. Push her fortune? How?
What do you call her fortune?

GLAB. Look you now,
One cannot live on nosegays and on wreaths!
Are you not Cæsar's, soul and body, bound
To peril both to serve his merest whim?
That's her case too! Who wants to live must serve!
That's how the world wags!

THUM. Këyx then has cause

For what he said about her, and her charms
Are only wares to sell, and I——

GLAB. Good luck,

You'd like to have them to yourself for nothing!

A pretty business truly. A fine——

Is like the sunshine, everybody's

Get out of which each gets a plan.

Now must I to the palace to report
 Myself ; but you—or we'll have brawls again—
 You must not join the others over there ;
 I'll give you up the little chamber here,
 For which I bargained for my private use.

(Pointing to a side-door, L.)

'Tis there, my beauty ! Now compose yourself,
 And try to rest, until your bath is ready,
 And when Lycisca comes, I'll send her here !
 Now, will that suit you ? Only do not fret,
 For fretting makes you pale and haggard ! Go,
 Go sleep, my beauty !

*(While speaking, he has led THUMELICUS to
 the door, L. ; after he has disappeared.)*

What a rogue it is !

Must play the jealous fool ! What silly stuff !

*(Exit up the stage, L. ; after a pause
 a side-door, R., opens.)*

Enter RAMIS.

RAM. The tumult has calmed down ! They are all
 gone !

Why linger ? Come, Thusnelda ! Let the breath
 Of the spring breeze expand thy weary breast ;
 The fresh May green will cheer and give thee strength !

(Enter THUSNELDA.)

Thou answerest not, and pain and grief, methinks,
 Lie heavier on thy soul than e'er before.

Speak, dearest, speak ! What ails thee ? Speak !

THUSN.

'Tis nought !

For what are wild, and wandering, idle thoughts,
Anger that cannot strike, despairing prayers,
And hate and love that cannot find a vent—
What more are they than this? A world of woe,
And yet but nothingness, blank nothingness!

RAM. Enough, Thusnelda! Come into the air,
And from thy suffering turn thine eyes away!

THUSN. And whither turn them, that they may not
light

On what has cursed and agonised my life,—
Not light on Rome, Rome everywhere? Shall I
Look forward? To a grave in Roman earth?
Or shall I rivet them upon these walls,
Wherein Rome builds for me a living tomb?
If back I look, is it not Rome, still Rome,
I see envenoming my girlhood's years?
Was it not Rome, with glozing crafty words,
Upon my aged father worked so long,
Till he, Segestes, the free German prince,
False to his people, heedless of my prayers,
Became the Roman general's serf and spy?
And when Arminius, Germany's noblest son,
Sued for my hand, Segestes spurned his suit,
Spurned with harsh terms Rome's dread antagonist;
And when beneath the cloud of night I fled
On a swift steed with him my heart had chosen,
Was it not Rome, yes, Rome, revengeful Rome,
That from my father's livid lips drew forth
The curse, that, like a ceaseless thunder-peal,
After long years still vibrates through my heart?

RAM. Heavy have been thy sorrows, but not less

THUSN.Woe is me !

Dost mock me, woman? Or dost thou not feel
What thou extollest is my shame, and that
Arminius' wife, made captive by the foe,
Should of her triumph have despoiled proud Rome,
Have hurled her scorn on Rome's omnipotence,
And cheated her by dying? And I wished
To die, and would! With proud exultant step
And head erect, I faced Germanicus ;
I was already thinking, how I might
Snatch from some Roman satellite the sword
Should set me free in death, when suddenly
I felt a something stir beneath my heart,
And the first warning of a life to be
Thrilled me with secret rapture through and through.
The mother's heart was born within me then,
And with its first pulsation came a voice
That whispered "Live and love!" Then my head
drooped,

My resolution fled, and to the chains
Without a word I rendered up my hands.

THUSN. And why,
Why could I not? For what did I refrain,

Save to give Rome a firmer hold on me?
To give her power, by threatening my boy's life,
To make me follow on the car that bore
Germanicus in triumph through her streets?
For what did I refrain, save that they might
Tear my child from me, o'er me hold the threat
To slay him limb by limb, if ever I
Should venture to lay hands upon myself?
Oh foolish pity, thus to spare my son
For grief and shame and Rome's insulting jests!
Oh nature's voice, that flattered to deceive,
Luring me on to live, when life's best crown,
Freedom and fame, were to be found in death!

RAM. And yet, if it were true what thy heart's voice
Spoke to thee then? If all more gloriously,
For being long delayed, the bliss should bloom,
Which to thy blind despair seemed lost for ever,—
Thusnelda, if thou wert to hope——

THUSN. To hope?
I hope for nothing!

RAM. While there's life, there's hope;
And thou—thou livest still, and soon wilt feel,
With an intensity ne'er felt before,
What life is and pure joy! Needs it that I
Speak out my thought more plainly! Oh, rejoice,
The time is come, deliverance near at hand!

THUSN. Deliverance?

RAM. This morning—you were still
Tossing and moaning in your fevered dreams—
The porter had unbarred the grated door,
And I stole out to cool my burning brow;

And walking through the shrubs beneath the wall
 Which leads to the Prætorians' Hall along,
 A stone fell suddenly before my feet !
 I took this for some boyish frolic, but
 Behold a second, then a third ! I stopped.
 In the fresh sinewy accents of our speech,
 In the full tones that in our forests ring,
 These rhyming words came slowly on my ear :—

*“ You that lie imprisoned here,
 Know, deliverance is near !
 In the noontide's sultry blaze,
 When sleep upon the sentries weighs,
 From the wall I drop, so then
 Hither, hither, come again ! ”*

It ceased, and I heard footsteps stealing off !
 Back to the house I reeled in ecstasy,
 To share with thee my rapture ! But I found thee
 Silent, thine anger turned against thyself,
 And, fearing to increase thy torturing doubts, said
 nothing.

But now 'tis near high noon, the time at hand !
 Now follow me, come out, to meet high fortune,
 The tidings of release Arminius sends.

THUSN. Arminius is dead !

RAM.

The Romans said so !

The wish was father to the words !

THUSN.

He's dead ;

Were I no widow, I had not been here.

RAM. Wherefore drop poison into each glad hour,

And wormwood into every joyful word?
Come, come, Thusnelda! Not go with me?

THUSN. No!

RAM. Well then, I go alone. Wait for me here,
And I on my return into thy lap
Shall pour the ripe fruit of assurèd joy. (*Exit up R.*)

THUSN. So oft deceived, and yet so prone to trust,
So worn with suffering, yet so full of hope!
Shall I despise her mood, or envy it?
And if perchance she should be right? No, no!
The gods are strangers to Thusnelda now!
For if they knew of her, if they looked down
Into her mother-heart, reft of her child,
Her only child, by fraud and ruthless force,
Both parted, yet both knit together by
One threat of death held over both their heads,
And could they see how, lonely and forlorn,
I curse each day that comes, and yet live on,
Scorn myself daily that I live, yet daily
Go on accumulating scorn on scorn,
Oh, if they saw me from their cloudy home,
They could not choose but weep, weep scalding
tears,
There though enthroned above the dust of earth,
Divine and inaccessible to pain!
But no, they see it not; they turn in wrath
Their radiant gaze from the base heart, preferred
Disgraceful slavery to eternal fame;
The gods take of Thusnelda heed no more!
RAM. (*rushing in from the principal entrance, R.*) 'Tis
he! He comes, Thusnelda!

THUSN. How! He comes?
Whom mean'st thou? Speak——

RAM. Oh brightest day, that e'er
With golden radiance kissed the dusky earth!
'Tis he! He follows me——

THUSN. Who follows thee? Speak! speak!

RAM. Here, look thyself!

THUSN. (*seeing MEROVIG, who meanwhile has entered
at the back, R.*). How? Do my eyes deceive
me?

'Tis thou! Oh, Merovig, the tears that course
Each other down thy aged beard proclaim,
'Tis thou indeed!

MER. (*kneeling*). My princess!

THUSN. Do not weep!
The gods have willed it, that we thus should meet,
And power abides with them! Rise up, my friend,
And now, before of lesser things you speak,
Tell me one thing. How died Arminius?

MER. Thou know'st, then——

RAM. How! It was not all a lie,
Trick, and deception, then?

THUSN. Hush! No complaints!
I mourned for him, while you still cherished hope;
I mourn no longer now, I envy him!
How died my dear one? Tell me!

MER. How he died?
I cannot bear to speak——

THUSN. Say on, say on!

MER. Learn then, since so thou wilt! Germanicus,
Soon after he had made thee prisoner,

Was summoned back to Rome. Arminius then,
That he might set thee free, and punish Rome,
Resolved to force his way to Italy.
Sure of the tribes that dwell upon the Rhine,
The Ems, and Weser, he essayed to make
Pact with Marbod, the Marcomanni's King,
So from the Rhine and Danube in one mass
Might our vast Germany sweep to the South !
But Marbod, proudly trusting his own strength,
And who long since had in Arminius seen
A dreaded rival for Germania's throne,
Rejects the proffered league ! Hard words ensue,
The anger of the chiefs infects their people,
And through the land rings menace, clash of arms.

THUSN. Then strife ensued ? And jealousy again,
And care for petty selfish ends, divided
The German people in the very face
Of their one common foe ? Fools thus to lose
By such disunion all their vital force,
When, hand and will united, they might be
The lords invincible of all the world !

MER. 'Twas even as thou hast said ; nay, it was
worse !

Warfare ensued, and Marbod vanquished threw
Himself into Rome's arms, that promised him
Protection, which was servitude in fact ;
Thereon around Arminius rallied straight
All that was left of Marbod's kingdom, and
His power grew daily ; so too grew his foes,
Who, now to their aforetime comrades slaves,
In feigned submission veiled their rancorous hate ;

So with low cunning did they bide their time,
And, woe the while, it came. One evening we
Found our dear hero lying bathed in blood——

RAM. Slain——

MER. By foul craft struck down, pierced by a spear
Clean through the back into the heart that beat,
As never heart beat, for his country's honour!

THUSN. Assassinated! By his countrymen!
The Hero of the Teutoburger fight,
The Saviour, the Deliverer! Oh, woe!
Oh Germany, woe upon you! Did you not,
Beseech and pray for a great man, and did
The bounty of the gods not send him to you?
And when from your sore straits he set you free,
Then you hung back from him like cravens, then
Your petty souls before his greatness quailed,
And then—woe for you, Germany, oh woe!—
Then when the saviour had achieved his task,
You snatched him up, the man divinely sent,
And dashed him to destruction at your feet.
(*After a pause.*) Go on! The deed, no doubt, had its
reward,

Applauded by a grateful loyal people?

MER. No, lady, no! With the sad tidings spread
A silence o'er the country far and near!
Nor praise nor blame found voice. The years passed on,
And then a whisper here and there was heard,
And men talked vaguely of old better days,
And then they named the man through whom they came;
And now—now flies afar o'er hill and dale
A cry of yearning anguish for Arminius,

And every tongue, through all our German land,
And every song and saga with one voice
Proclaim, it never bore a nobler son !

THUSN. Ay, even so ! 'Tis ever thus with them !
They hold in scorn what lives within their midst,
And drag it down, and trample it under foot !
What is is nought, what was alone's revered ;
Our German greatness grows but from the grave !

MER. 'Twas not a name alone grew from his grave,
His spirit rose from it, a radiant power,
And swept us onwards in the path he trod !
To unify our forces was his aim,
To break the mastery of Rome his vow ;
And now this purpose burns in every breast,
And for the struggle nerves each manly arm.
" A Germany all one ! " rings through the vales,
" One kingdom and one leader ! " is the cry ;
" Who shall it be ; the standard who shall bear ? "
Then I reminded them, Thusnelda lives,
And to Arminius has borne a son !
" Yes ! " rose the cry ; " it shall be he ! 'Tis he,
Arminius' son shall lead us ! "

RAM. Ye kind gods !

THUSN. Is it some feverish frenzy mads my brain ?
Are these fantastic dreams that round me float ?
Is what you tell me true ?

MER. Trust me, it is !
Yet further ; with ten comrades, I was chosen,
And sent on here to Italy, to set
You and your son at liberty, and bring
You home. The readier to achieve our task,

We all took service in Rome's German cohort ;
 So I contrived to make my way to you ;
 And as a pledge and earnest of her trust
 Do thou accept (*kneeling*) what Germany has sent,
 For thee to place in thy son's hand anon,
 That he may use it, as his father did,
 To uphold his country's honour and its might !

THUSN. His sword ! Arminius' sword ! I know it
 well.

Thou noble blade, with unpretending hilt,
 I know thee well ! As thou art, such was he,
 The soul so rich, the man himself so simple !
 It is the sword ; but he that is to wear it,
 My son——

MER. You tremble ; why thus moved ?——

THUSN. The boy

Whom in my loneliness and grief I bore,—
 My boy, my Sigmar, my last comfort, Rome
 Tore from my arms. She gave him a slave's name,
 And lets me year by year entreat in vain,
 That I might see him once, but for one day !
 If yet he lives, or death has set him free,
 I cannot tell ! Wherefore then ask from me
 Arminius' son ? I have him not ! Alone,
 A withered barren trunk, I stand and mourn !

MER. Nay, do not mourn, Thusnelda, for he lives——

RAM. (*who has been watching at the back, runs forward*). Away, away ! I hear a noise within !

THUSN. He lives ! and where, where lives he ?

MER. In Ravenna.

He has grown up, a vigorous young man,

And at this hour, I know, is on his way
To Rome——

THUSN. What, here? To Rome?

RAM. Hark! There are voices,
And footsteps near! Away!

MER. The hour draws nigh ;
But one word more! Again thou'lt see him,—soon,
Perhaps this very day! All is prepared
To rescue him and thee! Hope, then, have trust——

RAM. Quick! quick! Away, away!

(Exit with him up the stage, R.)

THUSN. See him again!

But one word, Merovig! See him again!
Is't dream? Or truth? No, no; it is no dream.
This is Arminius' sword, and shall I not
Within my son's hand place it? shall I not
Incite his spirit to a hero's deeds,
Setting his father's image 'fore his eyes?
I shall, I shall! Ye great, ye gracious gods,
Oft in the silent night have I besought ye,
To place within my hands, and on my soul,
Some mighty purpose yet before I died,—
To trust me with some mission high and grave,
That, undistraught by weakness or by hate,
I might unswervingly my task fulfil,—
Might be Thusnelda still, Arminius' wife,
And worthy of the German name I bear!—
This ye have done, have trusted to my hands
My country's might, her honour, and her future;
And here I vow—clutch ye this hand I raise
In witness of my oath, and hold it fast—

I will fulfil the task ye have enjoined ;
 I will fulfil it, and, if fail I may,
 I'll break, as breaks the oak before the blast,
 But bend I will not, ever, ever more !

Enter THUMELICUS.

THUM. It is too hot within ! I cannot sleep !
 And still that fellow Këyx haunts my sight !
 So ho ! Who is that woman with the sword ?

RAMIS (*runs in without observing THUMELICUS*).

RAM. He got away ! Unnoticed as he came !

THUSN. Hush ! hush ! look yonder ! Oh, ye gracious
 gods !

RAM. What ails thee ? What's amiss——

THUSN. Dost thou not see——

There ! Or is't only to my eyes revealed ?

Look yonder, look !

RAM. By the gods' cloud-wrapt throne !

It is Arminius' self from crown to sole !

THUM. Why stare ye so at me, ye crackbrained crones ?
 What would ye ? Speak !

THUSN. No ; it is not the shade

Of my Arminius risen from the grave !

No, thine eye flashes, and thy voice rings clear,
 Thou liv'st, thou art my son, and—hence, ye tears,
 With your bedimmed veils !—and let these arms
 Enfold thee, clasp thee to my mother-heart !

THUM. What are you after ? Let me——

THUSN.

Know'st me not?

But I, I know thee well—the dimple here,
And here the dark-brown mole. Sigmar, my son,
Dost thou disown the breast that suckled thee,
The arms that rocked thy baby limbs to sleep?

THUM. Sigmar—I've heard that name before——

THUSN.

Here, take

This sword, 'tis thine, 'tis thy inheritance!
Now flames a brighter lustre from thine eyes!
Oh, look upon me, longer, closer still!
And let me steep and cheer my wounded soul
In the transparent depths of thy dear eyes!

THUM. That look! That voice! Am I gone crazed?

THUSN.

Hush! hush!

Music!—These are the songs of home! Oh, list,
How soft and sweet! How! Comes on night so soon?
I see thee not, yet do I hold thee fast—
We shall not part, my son——

THUM.

She totters, sinks!

Come here!

RAM. She faints! Support her! .

THUSN.

Oh, my son!

(She is lowered to the ground in the arms of THUMEL-

ICUS. RAMIS kneels beside her. Curtain falls.)

ACT II.

Hall in the Imperial Palace, with pillared arcades, through which the inner chambers are seen at the back. Left and right against the walls are tables and chairs inlaid with ivory and gold, tripods, &c. In the background slaves and freedmen. In the centre of the stage senators and knights, some in groups conversing, others moving about. In the foreground (R.) FLAVIUS ARMINIUS standing moodily apart, leaning against a pillar. VALERIUS and GALLUS enter (C.) while TITUS MARCIUS enters (L.).

VAL. Ah, here he comes !

GALL. Welcome, friend Marcius,
welcome.

MAR. Give you good day, my friends ! Is Caius
Cæsar

Yet to be seen ?

GALL. No : he has summoned in
Cassius and Piso only.

MAR. (*in a whisper*). Was it not
From this same Piso's house that Cæsar took
Livia his wife away with him, and bade

Her husband send her on without delay
A letter of divorce?

GALL. Ay, so it was,
All but the letter of divorce!

MAR. How so?

GALL. Rather, methinks, a letter of exchange!

MAR. Excellent! Capital!

VAL. (*in a low voice*). Hush! are you mad?
(*Aloud to MARCIUS.*) You at the palace were a guest last
night?

MAR. I was.

VAL. And did things all go pleasantly?

GALL. Was Cæsar cheerful?

MAR. Too much so at first,
And later on too little! Cæsonia brought him
Sylla, the famed mathematician,
Who, in obedience to an old command,
Had cast the Cæsar's horoscope——

VAL. What then?

MAR. (*in a low voice, as he takes them across with him
to the foreground, L.*)

Let us, I pray you, step aside; I see
Flavius Arminius standing over there,
And I don't trust your renegades!

GALL. Now, speak!
Proceed!

VAL. What happened?

MAR. In walks Sylla, makes
Obeisance grave and mute, and hands the Cæsar
A tablet with this brief inscription, "Cæsar,
Not Brutus, but a Cassius threatens thee!"

From swamps and filth 'neath the imperial rays !
'Twould serve him right, say I !

VAL. Speak lower, friends !
The tribune, see, Cornelius Sabinus,
Has just come in—he's Cassius' right hand.

GALL. Speak lower, then, but speak,—how did it
end ?

MAR. All right ! Cæsonia, the Augusta, first
Got Sylla to withdraw, then whilst with wine
And kisses she cajoled the Cæsar, chid him,
Reminding him how 'mongst the troops there were
Thousands of Cassii, and the stir 'twould make,
Were his command to reach the Legions' ears ;
Then Cæsar—to be brief—at once resolved,
Of all his Cassiuses he'd only wipe
These out whom he especially disliked,
And thereupon we left——

VAL. And that was all ?

MAR. Well, for the moment, yes ! But I have
heard,

Forty death-warrants were despatched by dawn
Into the provinces !

VAL. By dawn to-day ?

GALL. And afterwards ?——

MAR. Hush ! hush ! The Cassius !
(*During the latter part of this dialogue CASSIUS CHÆREA,
Prefect of the Prætorians, has entered at the back
of the stage, coming from the rooms within, and
has advanced with some slaves to centre.*)

CASS. (*to the slaves*). The palanquin ! Cæsar will to
the bath !

Go one of you, and let the empress know !

(Exeunt two slaves.)

You, Consulares, Cæsar waits for you !

(MARCUS, GALLUS, VALERIUS, FLAVIUS ARMINIUS,
and the others salute him and retire up, with the
exception of CORNELIUS SABINUS, and disappear
into the inner rooms.)

(Aside.) Now then, to business ! No more loitering
now !

(To a third slave.)

Cornelius Sabinus, seek him out !

I would have speech with him !

CORNELIUS SABINUS *(advancing)*. He waits your
summons !

CASS. Good morrow, tribune ! Any news for me ?

CORN. Nothing, save that the gladiators, those
Whom Cæsar sent for to Ravenna, have
Arrived this morning. On this scroll you'll find
Their names, and also what each man can do !

CASS. *(taking the list)*. The gladiators of Ravenna !
Ay, all right.

I heard they had arrived.

CORN. What kind of night

Has Cæsar had, and is he well to-day ?

CASS. Quite brisk and well, more gracious, too, than
ever !

CORN. *(after a pause)*. Cassius, we are alone, and
safe to speak !

CASS. *(after glancing round)*. Art sure of that ? Well,
know then, every day
The danger grows more imminent, and calls

For measures of defence ! I mean not trifles,
Such as the trick that Cæsar lately played
On Piso ; no, nor even that yesterday
He had the head of Lepidus cut off,
To fill the empty Treasury with his wealth——

CORN. And we are here in Rome, and we are
Romans !

CASS. I will not even say how he profaned
The Dioscuri's great time-hallowed shrine,
Placing his statue side by side with theirs,
And, as the guardian god of Latium,
Called on the Senate to make prayers to him,
And raise up votive altars to his praise !

CORN. Is nothing sacred, then ? The world and
life,
Must they be governed by a madman's freaks ?

CASS. It almost seems so ! The plain truth is this ;
Caligula is sick ! He used to be,
Thou know'st, a man of brains and judgment, quick
To see and to decide, weighty in speech,
And loved the arts.—But for these last few weeks,—
In business or in converse, 'tis all one,—
He drops by fits into a dream-like maze,
Staring on vacancy, starts up anon,
Shouts, dances, leaps, then with a woful sigh
Cries, “ He is poisoned, that his life's assailed ! ”
Then reels and staggers, till, quite spent, he sinks
Like a dead man into a breathless swoon.
By night he wanders sleepless through the halls,
Sees phantoms as he goes in every nook,
Stalks up to them, and babbles to the walls,

Answering their ghostly gibberish, which is heard
By no one but himself.

CORN. Crazed! As long since
He lost all stint and bound in his desires,
So to his troubled spirit outward things
Have lost their substance and coherency!
And this affrights thee! What deliyers him
Into thy hand, disturbs thee?

CASS. Were he mad,
Quite mad, I should not care ! But 'tis just this
Half blindness, this unsteady feeble glance
Of the soul's eye, this same paralysis
Of mind which wakes up suddenly to nerve
Its tiger spring, whose aim none can foresee,
'Tis this that scares me ! The insane caprice,
Which prompted him this morning to send out
Twoscore death-warrants, in some sudden fit
May on his tablets set my name. In brief,
I'll end this torture, and for ever !

CORN. How,
Thou wouldst, then——

CASS. He must hence, and quickly too !
I know thou yearnest after our old Rome ;
What Cassius, Brutus did has fired thy brain !
Well, be it so, let us repeat their deed !
He must away ! Amazed ? And doubting ?

CORN. No,
Lead only thou, and fear not I will follow !

CASS. This very day then let us set to work !
I will take counsel with the Senators,
Do thou find how the Prætorians are disposed !

All else some fitter moment!—Hush! I see
The Cæsar coming.

(*CALIGULA appears with his suite,
and advances slowly.*)

CORN. Who are these with him?

CASS. That's Piso there, the same whose wife he
stole

The other day, and Titus Marcius,
An idle prate-a-pace; the rest a troop
Of creeping things, that fawn and quake for life!
The old man with the bandage o'er his eye,
Who now adjusts the folds of Cæsar's robe,
Is Flavius Arminius.—Him thou knowest?

CORN. Arminius' brother, who our Varus slew
In the Teutoburger Forest?

CASS. Ay, the same;
And he adjusts the folds of Cæsar's robe!

CORN. In his place I should blush——

CASS. Pshaw! man, he is
Just such a German, as we sons of Rome!

(*CALIGULA, resting on the arm of CAIUS PISO, and
attended by TITUS MARCIUS, GALLUS, VALERIUS,
FLAVIUS ARMINIUS, and other senators and
equites, has meanwhile reached the centre of the
stage; in the background, slaves.*)

CASS. (*after saluting CALIGULA, to the slaves*). The
litter, ho!

CALIGULA. You'd have me to the bath?
No, Cassius, no! I'm thoroughly worn out,
So sick and weary, I feel like to drop.

CASS. Ho, slaves, a chair! A chair there, for the Cæsar!

CALIG. As I was saying, Piso, the dread weight
Of empire lies too heavy on my soul ;
The duty of chastising irks my conscience,
The hourly claims on all my powers exhaust me.
Add, too, the perils, toils of the campaign
In Germany.

PISO. Yet such laurels followed them,
As even Germanicus, thy mighty father,
Did never win.

CASS. (*aside, to CORNELIUS*). He made some dozen
slaves

Appear, disguised as Germans, in the scrub,
Whereon two legions presently must scour
The forest through, and set some trophies up.
That, friend, was his campaign in Germany !

CALIG. Yes, this campaign—thy hand, Arminius !

(*Supported by ARMINIUS and PISO, letting
himself down upon the chair.*)

We achieved wonders, and our foemen fled—
Thou, Flavius, too, wert there.

FLA. I was, my liege.

CALIG. And saw them run, these German churls ?

FLA. Oh yes,

They ran, great Cæsar !

CALIG. Ha ! your colour mounts ;
You are a German—oh, I don't forget !

FLA. If love for mighty Rome, and loyalty
In Cæsar's service shown, can make a Roman,
Then I am one !

CALIG. Well said, ay, very well !
Thanks, thanks !

(*Pause.*)

CASS. (*approaching* CALIGULA). Thou art not like thyself; what care

Despoils us of thy smile?

CALIG. Vertigo, friend!

Simple vertigo! Strange! The old man stands
Before my eyes for ever.

CASS. What old man?

CALIG. I'll tell you.

(He makes a sign; the bystanders fall back several paces, PISO and MARCIUS, who are stationed behind his chair, and CASSIUS, who stands before him, alone remaining.)

Yesternight, when Livia
Had left my chamber,—hark you, in your ear,
That woman, Piso, is a paragon.

PISO. You make me proud, my Cæsar.

CALIG. She had gone,
And I lay sleepless on my couch, when, lo!
The curtain rustled, and comes gliding in
My uncle Drusus, who took poison—then
Silanus, my wife's father, who, you know,
Cut his own throat in the bath, 'stead of his beard;
And he held up the gory knife to me,
As though 'twas I had edged it for the fool;
And lastly came Tiberius, my uncle,
Who bore a pillow—yes, the very same
Which I, as those that love me not report,
Did smother him withal,¹ and thereupon,

¹ The allusion here is founded on the statement in Suetonius (Caius Cæsar Caligula, c. 12) that Caligula was said by some to be privy to the poisoning of Tiberius,—that while the old man still continued

Grasping each others' hands, the three began—

(Laughing convulsively.)

I nearly died with laughing ; 'twas, ye gods,
Too monstrous, too absurd—began to dance,
Slowly at first, then faster, faster still,
And still more close they span their circle round me,
And still approached me nearer as I lay.

(With a shout.) There, Cassius, look, look !—there they
are again !

Avaunt ! Ye shall not—Hence,

Ye icy hands ! Back from my brow, I say—

(Sinks back in the chair in a frenzy.)

PISO *(aside)*. Horrible !

MARCUS *(aside)*. Fearful !

CASS. My hair stands on end,

The life-blood curdles at my heart ! *(Aloud.)* A doctor !

A doctor, ho !

CALIG. *(starting wildly up)*. A doctor ? I'll have
none !

As true as I am Caius Cæsar, none !

Off goes his head who babbles in surmise !

(After a pause recovers his composure.)

How fares it, my good Cassius, with my tawny
Hyrcanian whelps—the lions six, I mean,
Which Tubero sent me from Damascus—eh ?

CASS. Now they have rested, they show fresh and fierce
As one could wish ; thou mayest at any time
Employ them in the Circus.

to breathe, Caligula, finding him resist an attempt to take his signet-
ring from his finger, ordered a pillow to be thrown upon him, and
even throttled the dying man with his own hand.

CALIG. That is well !
Something you said of gladiators, too ?

CASS. Who from Ravenna have arrived to-day ;
This scroll contains their numbers and their names !

CALIG. (*takes up the paper and runs his eye over it*).
Here's fifty named, and those from Capua,
From Nola—Good! They'll make a holocaust;
Life's ruddy juice will flow in copious streams,
And steam in fragrant vapours! Pah! Even that,
(Throws the scroll upon the table near him.)
How flavourless, how stale! There's no spice, none,
For a dulled palate, no provocative
For unstrung nerves!

CASS. (*who meanwhile has retired up the stage*).

Room! Room! So please you, room
For the Augusta!

CÆSONIA (*attended by several women, who remain at the back, enters through the centre door*).

Thanks to the gods that still
I find you here ; I almost feared that I
Should come too late.

CALIG. Joy never comes too late ;
And Beauty's welcome, come whene'er she may.

CÆS. And art thou well? Thou look'st so pale, my
Cæsar.

CALIG. But thou art bright as Aphrodite's self !
This charming dress, that shows the noble limbs
More than it veils their symmetry ; this head,
That on this snow-white neck so proudly sways !
And when I think that this most lovely head——

CÆS. Well, that this head?

CALIG. That it must fall, if I
 Command, a twofold rapture thrills me through !
 But for the present—come, I'll rest me here !
 (*CÆSONIA conducts him to the chair.*)

But for the present let this lovely head
 Devise how we shall make the day run by !

CÆS. You will not to the bath, then ?

CALIG. No, no bath !
 (*Half aside, and mysteriously.*) It minds me of Silanus,
 who in the bath——

CÆS. Why fret about the dead ? Compose yourself !
 With music fortify your listless nerves.

CALIG. (*as before*). What ! Thou'dst have music, for
 the ghosts to dance ?

CÆS. (*aside, to CASSIUS, whilst CALIGULA lies back in
 the chair, his head dropped, and staring upon
 vacancy*).

These fancies fright me. Mark, O Cassius, mark,
 How fixedly he stares ! How shall I stir
 The stagnant waters of this torpid soul ?
 I seek in vain, where'er I turn mine eye.

CASS. (*aside*). Yet need there is, that something
 should be found !

This brooding makes him savage in the end,
 And the sick tiger no caresses tame.

CALIG. (*starting up*). Cæsonia, where art thou ? Stay
 by me !

CÆS. (*advancing to him*). Come, let us to the gardens,
 sweet, and there
 Amuse ourselves with tennis.

CALIG. No—Yes—No—

I cannot yet resolve to be resolved !
Let us, my goddess, first arrange the show
Of gladiators which I mean to give.
The rascals have arrived !

(Unfolding the scroll which lies upon the table.)

See ! what is this ?

Thumelicus—I seem to know that name ;
How should I know it ? H'm ! Thumelicus——

MAR. *(comes forward)*. 'Tis very like, that from
Thusnelda's prayer,
Which I presented yesterday, the name
Has rested in your memory——

FLA. Thusnelda !

CALIG. Thusnelda ? Was not that Arminius' wife,
Who on a time 'gainst Varus took the field ?
And was it not my sire, Germanicus,
Who took her prisoner, when shortly after
His vengeance swooped upon the German woods ?

MAR. 'Twas even so, and thy great sire, my liege,
Brought her to Rome.

CALIG. Tiberius, my uncle,
When she refused to attend the victor's car,
In the triumph of Germanicus, did he not
Command them tear the infant from her breast
She to Arminius bore in prison here,
And threaten——

MAR. Yes, he threatened her to slay
The child, unless in silence she obeyed
His every 'hest, my liege ; and she obeyed !

CALIG. *(aside)*. Ay, he had brains, the old man with
the pillow !

(*Aloud.*) And what does this Thusnelda want from me?
What prays she for?

MAR. A favour she implores,
As oft refused already as besought,
That, after many years, she once, but once,
May be permitted to behold her son,
Who by Tiberius' order has been trained
Far from his mother at Ravenna's school.

CALIG. What say'st thou? In Ravenna, is that so?
Thumelicus—Thumel——

MAR. That is her son!

CALIG. Thumelicus, Arminius', Thusnelda's son!

FLA. (*aside*). Arminius' son, my nephew?

CALIG. See now, see!
How things combine! She longs to see her son,
And he is here. Arminius' son! Oh rare!

(*Bending back to CÆSONIA.*)

What do you think, love? Can we not devise
Something from this, of taste most exquisite?
A sport to charm and kindle,—a delight
To stir not merely sense, but soul withal,—
A sight more stimulating than the spice
Of Taproban and India, eh?

CÆS. What sight,
What sport, my Cæsar?

CALIG. How! What sport?
A combat, my sweet innocence! Just think,
A youth, before his mother's very eyes
To fight, bleed, fall! Such sport was never known,
Since first the Circus' sand was drenched in blood!

(*Springing up.*)

FLA. (*aside*). Oh shame and grief! Oh horror and dismay!

CALIG. (*walks a few paces rapidly to and fro, then stopping suddenly in front of CÆSONIA, with an expression of irresolution*). Yet, looked at rightly, this is, after all,

Mere empty show,—means nothing, nothing done!

CASS. (*in a whisper to CÆSONIA*). Now use thy ready brain! Let not the toy,

Scarce even grasped, slip from the nerveless hand!

CALIG. What, pray, to me is this Arminius' son?

A creature most contemptible, a thing
Of pap like that mine enemy! go to!
A gladiator merely, and as he
Can't win, where were my triumph if he fell?

CÆS. How! is't no triumph, that Arminius' brood
Shall cease to be a menace to thy power?
No triumph, that the child and mother, kept
As pledges by thine uncle anxiously,
Become to thee as nothing, scarcely fit
In the arena to make sport for Rome?

CASS. (*aside to CÆSONIA*). Oh, excellent! go on!

CÆS. Is it no triumph, that,
If with the Germans many a weary year
Thy father fought, and never could subdue them,
Victory should light on thee, his greater son;
That thou art first to bring Germania low?
For not the victor in one bloody fight,
But he who makes his foe a mock and shame,
'Tis he that truly sinks him in the dust.

CALIG. Yes, thou art right! This gives significance

And background to the pleasant stirring sport.
Now the whole picture stands before my soul :
Thusnelda, with the oak-wreath in her hair ;
Her son, as German weaponed and attired,
Stretched 'neath the blade of his antagonist.
Who bears my weapons, wears my purple too ;
All this shall, loud as Jove's own thunder, speak
Caligula's triumph and Germania's fall !

CASS. (*aside to CÆSONIA*). Now we are safe !

FLA. (*aside*). Help, rescue, O ye gods !

CALIG. Wine, bring me wine, and let the music
sound !

(*To CÆSONIA*.) Come to my arms, divine enchantress,
come !

This thou, thou a mere woman, couldst devise !
Come to my arms ! for now I am at ease ;
A wish, an aim once more before me stands,
I still can will, and therefore still I live !

CASS. (*aside*). Ay ! but not long, else Sylla's stars do
lie !

CALIG. Wine, ho ! Henceforth a festal day shall be
This day, which flung a new excitement's pearl
Upon my life's forlorn and arid strand !

*(Music heard without, which continues
to the end of the scene.)*

Thou, Cassius, straightway shalt before me bring
These gladiators, of Ravenna ; thou,
Piso, away, and in my name salute
The Senate ; tell the fathers I invite them

To Caius Cæsar's triumph, every man.

Why do you pause? Away!

*(Exit PISO. Enter slaves with
golden goblets and cups.)*

CÆS. *(seizing a cup).* Here, here is wine!

CALIG. *(seizing a goblet, pours for CÆSONIA).* Thanks,
Hebe, thanks! This goblet to the fair

And happy issue of this sport of mine!

CASS. To whom dost thou confide the ædile's charge,
To see that all things needful are prepared
Beforehand at the Circus?

CALIG. *(looking round the circle).* The ædile's charge?
To whom confide it? *(After a pause.)* Flavius
Arminius,

Approach!—To thee, who on the Weser once
Closed to thy brother's prayer thine ear and heart;
Thou, that all Roman art, German no more,
To thee do I confide the ædile's charge!

FLA. To me, my liege, to me——

CALIG. Hence to Thusnelda,
And to her take with you her long-lost son!
Let him be hers until the games begin;
Then he shall fight before his mother's eyes,
And she shall see him stricken by his doom!
This is my will, so bear it unto her,
And mark it to the letter be fulfilled;
For should it prove that thou art more a German,
And less a Roman, than thou late didst vaunt,
Then, hypocrite, by Kronion's thunderbolts,
(Hurls the goblet to his feet.)

Then shall thy head, even as this goblet, roll!

(*Aside to CÆSONIA.*) What say'st thou, dovelet? Now

I have them all,

The whole stock of Arminius, in my net.

(*Aloud.*) And now away! Let the flutes shrilly sound,

Awake the pæan, let the goblets ring!

Till to Olympus high our revel mount,

And down to Orcus' depths its echoes clang!

I live again! To live is to enjoy.

So, rapture, let thy sparkling fountains flow,

And sweep us onwards in thy surging waves!

(*Exit, leading CÆSONIA; the rest crowd
tumultuously after them.*)

FLA. (*advancing*). Accursed who dreamt, and from his
dream awakes,

The toy of blind caprice, of brutish power!

ACT III.

SCENE AS IN THE FIRST ACT.

Enter GLABRIO from the back (R.), with LYCISCA, who has a chaplet of roses in her hair, several chaplets on her arm, and a basket of flowers in her hand.

GLAB. Not to the Forum, no! You're to come here; I want you here.

LYC. And shall I learn at last,
Why you make me, who, scarce arrived in Rome,
At once betook me to my trade, and had
Buyers like bees come swarming round me, why
You make me leave the cheery market-place,
And come on here to this dark dismal house?

GLAB. Why, quotha? Why? Because I am dead
beat,
Too tired to stir a finger, that's a fact,
With laying roundly on these rascals' backs;
Because 'tis you must bring the knaves to reason,
And smooth them down!

LYC. (*sets down her basket, and throws the chaplets upon it*).
Why, what has happened, eh?

GLAB. Fighting has happened ! all because of you,
Between Thumelicus and Këyx.

LYC. Fools !

GLAB. And then the lad Thumelicus, he found
His mother here, a German woman, whom
Rome keeps in prison here ! Now, as this woman
Is, as her husband was, of princely birth——

LYC. Is't possible ? Why then Thumelicus should be
A prince as well ! And we, we ventured, we,
To be upon such easy terms with him !
His ancestors will not half like it, will they ?

GLAB. Oh, 'tis a great mischance ! Just what you said,
The rest of my young fellows also said ;
“ My prince ! my king ! ” was everywhere the cry ;
With here and there a “ Savage ! ” “ German Bear ! ”
And every one was ready with his joke !

LYC. And he ?

GLAB. Struck with his fists all round about,
And as the rest would pay him off in kind,
Out with the whip's the word ! and, as I said,
I've trounced the knaves till I am fairly beat.
Therefore I sent for you to quiet them,
And bring my lads into right trim again ;
The fight comes off to-morrow, and, you know,
Fretting before a fight will never do.
Moreover, Cæsar picked Thumelicus
Out from the rest at the parade to-day,
And bade me bear in mind the lad should prove
His pluck and training in to-morrow's show.

LYC. A bootless hint, methinks ! He's up in all
The school can teach, and valiant as a lion.

GLAB. School-teaching, pah! The arena's sand is hot,

And he who for the first time fights with bare
Cold steel instead of the school's sword of wood,
Who sees himself set face to face before
Such an antagonist as Diodorus——

LYC. Not, sure, the Cappadocian Diodorus,
"The Son of Victory," as they call him here,
For that Colossus ne'er has met his match.

GLAB. That's why they chose him for antagonist!

LYC. Then has the Cæsar sworn he is to die;
Need must that he should fall!

GLAB. What nonsense, girl!

No one can ever tell who is to fall.
And if the lad but step into the lists
As cool and plucky as has been his wont,
Who knows to which side victory may incline?
So set his mad head straight upon his shoulders,
Smooth down the wrath-swollen veins upon his brow,
That rage and hatred draw no blinding veil
Across his eyes to-morrow; make him laugh,
Caress him——

LYC. No, I must provoke him first
To vent his fury all on me, and then
He'll do from sheer remorse whate'er I wish!

GLAB. Good, good, I will not cobble at thy craft;
But tell him,—for he dearly loves display—
That he shall fight in the arena, armed
In German fashion.

LYC. Shall he?

GLAB. Not a word

Of Diodorus! Speak of Këyx, rather,
As chosen out for his antagonist.

LYC. And how if Diodorus kill him, eh?

GLAB. Why, who can tell? Confound him! Though
he did——

LYC. Ay, ay! He is a gladiator! Meant
In shame to die, as I in shame to live!
What matter we, if only Rome's amused?

GLAB. What nonsense you do talk! Are you gone
mad?

No feeling, mind—no pity, no emotion,
Unless you wish to taste this whip of mine!
Think, girl, of gold and gain, and your own good—
All else is stuff, not worth a moment's thought!
But hush, he comes! And see, how red he looks,
How out of sorts, and clean distraught with rage!
By all the gods, did ever lad look thus,
Who had to fight next day before the Cæsar?
To work, then, girl! Take him in hand, use all
Your skill! Meanwhile, 'tis best I step aside!

*(Exit up the stage, L., as THUMELICUS
comes down from the back, R.)*

THUM. *(who has not noticed GLABRIO and LYCISCA,
advances).*

Plague on my fate! I had to do without
A mother when as child I needed her,
And find her now, when I could do without her!
By blood I am a prince of high degree,
A prince, without a rap! And all the fruit,
I gather from the news of my descent,
Is that the mongrel scum here rail at me

As Bear-Prince, Beggar-King! But wait a bit;
I've scored it up, and they shall pay for it!

LYC. (*dropping her basket and wreaths as if by accident*).
Oh dear, my flowers!

THUM. How! You here in Rome,
Lycisca! Can it be?

LYC. (*kneeling and picking up her flowers*). And is
that all?

You here in Rome! and never budge an inch
To help me with my flowers?

THUM. Flowers? How!
You have already stocked your shop with wares,
And ply, though scarce arrived, to make me wild,
The old disgusting business?

LYC. How! disgusting?
Are my poor flowers disgusting? Just look here,
These lovely roses, these anemones.

THUM. Away! Is this a market-place for flowers?
Be off, I say! Seek purchasers elsewhere!

LYC. (*who meanwhile has refilled her basket, and laid
the wreaths upon it*). And so I will, you ill-con-
ditioned churl,

Evermore scolding, finding fault! The Consular
I met just now, was more polite a deal;
A man well up in years, grey hairs, and yet
He smiled and patted me upon the cheeks,
And threw this tablet here into my basket.

(*Hands him the tablet.*)

Just look there, read! you can't, though, by the by!

THUM. Might if I liked, but won't!

LYC. Well, listen, then!



"Thou with the beautiful roses, what sellest thou,
roseate maiden?

Roses? Or is it thyself? Or both together? Con-
fess!"

THUM. And that you call polite? By all the gods,
Then are the lashes of a whip polite!

LYC. You naughty one, be good! 'Twas all a jest!
Come, you wild creature, let us make it up.
What's the old man to us? Look at me straight,
And smile! You won't? Oh, what's that dangling
from

Your girdle there? What can you want with such
A butcher's knife?

THUM. That's no affair of yours!

LYC. Do tell me what it is——

THUM. My father's sword.

LYC. Your father's sword? Who was your father,
then?

THUM. He was a German prince, his name Arminius,
And smote the Romans in—what was the name
My mother gave't?—the Teutoburger Forest!

LYC. German! The word is hideous to the ears!
A German prince! Then you too are, no doubt,
A German prince, just as your father was?

THUM. What! Will you also mock me, like the
rest?

As a Wild Man and Bearskin rail at me?
You dare, you jade, you?

LYC. Oh ye righteous gods!
I rail at you? Not I! I mock you? No!
Not I indeed! Ah, how you frighten me!

I'm all a-tremble! Why make such a fuss
About a heedless word? For my part, I
Would rather not be German, I confess.
'Tis but at best——

THUM. A bit of ill-luck ? that
Is what you think ? Well, on the market-place
To post one's self for show, tricked out, like you,
To titter, ogle right and left, to sell
Vile favours for vile gold, that surely is
More than a bit of mere ill-luck, 'tis shame
As well !

Lyc. Oh excellent ! This is my thanks
For coming from Ravenna after you—
For stealing to you from the market-place—
I could not get to see you soon enough—
And therefore——

THUM. Peace! No whimpering!

Lyc. Yes! Despire,
Abuse, and scold me!—Oh, it serves me right!
Fool that I am, why am I fond of you,
And cannot bear you should——

THUM. There, there, don't weep !
It makes me furious, to see you weep !
Come now, dry up your eyes ! My mother's talk,
My comrades' gibes, the sneers of Këyx had
Set all the blood a-boiling in my veins,
And now you come to——

Lyc. I? By all the gods,
To me 'twas glorious, that a German prince,
For such you are, should fight to-morrow, armed
In German fashion, in the Circus——

THUM.

I?

I? Armed in German fashion, in the Circus——

LYC. A casque with vulture's pinions—think of that!—

A bearskin on your shoulders, and your shield
Studded with bosses!—How! this fires you not!
You're not delighted! Time was, you were fond
Of fine array, and foreign armour, now——

THUM. No, no, I tell you, no! I will not fight
In German armour!LYC. Have you lost your wits?
Or has your mother put you out of heart?THUM. My mother? Pshaw! She does not even
know——LYC. Not know, that you're a gladiator? You
Have kept it dark from her, have never said——

THUM. She never asked, and what was I to say?

LYC. What then, by all the gods, should keep you
back?——THUM. I will not fight in a bear's garb; I won't
Be made the laughing-stock, the scoff, the jeer
Of yonder scum——LYC. How? Frightened they will scoff
And jeer at you? And just then I was glad,
That now it was your turn to scoff at them,
Chastise them, too——THUM. Chastise them? How, wench, how?
With what? Speak, speak!LYC. You still can ask, with what?
If you, whose German lineage they made light of,
You they dubb'd Bearskin, Savage, if you now,

As if in sheer defiance of their gibes,
Show in the lists to-morrow as a German,
And if you win,—and win you surely must——

THUM. Ha! as a German conquer them! I see!

LYC. If Këyx, chosen for your antagonist——

THUM. Këyx, you say?

LYC. If that insulting braggart,
Torn by the strong claws of the German bear,
Lies bleeding in the dust beneath your feet,
Is that not chastisement, that not revenge?

THUM. Këyx, picked out as my antagonist!
Oh that I had him here, that eye to eye
I had him now before me! From his jaws
That I might tear out his blaspheming tongue!
Oh that it were to-morrow!

LYC. You will fight, then?
Seriously now, you will?


THUM. Wither this hand,
If 'tis not bathed in Këyx's blood to-morrow!

LYC. You shrink no longer from the German garb?

THUM. In a fool's jacket I'd array myself,
So I might strike this villain Këyx dead!

LYC. Ha! your eye kindles, and your cheek's on fire!
Look, now you please me, now are once more
My own dear handsome gladiator,—yes—
And therefore you shall—No! not just quite yet—
Not till this evening, when I come again,
And if you're brisk and all alive, as now—
Then I'll repay you with a little kiss!

THUM. (*catching her as she tries to step away.*) And
why not now? Oh, let me have it now!



LYC. (*slipping from his grasp*). No! Loose me! Go!

THUM. (*running after her*). You shall, you must!

LYC.

No, no!

Not till this evening!

THUM. (*embracing her*). No, no, now!

Enter THUSNELDA by a side-door, R.

THUSN.

My son!

(THUMELICUS *takes his arms from* LYCISCA.)

THUSN. Who is that woman, boy?

LYC. (*to THUMELICUS*). Is this thy mother?

THUSN. And thou, who art thou? Speak!

LYC. (*who has replaced her wreaths upon her arm, and caught up her basket*). Why, like thyself,

A woman, only younger by a trifle,

Not high-born, but good-looking, lively, too;

No princess truly, but a Roman; I

Am like the roses 'tis my trade to sell—

I have a bloom, and prickles, too, at need;

Now, German princess, art content?

(*Throwing THUMELICUS a kiss.*) To-night! (*Exit up L.*)

THUSN. I know, my son, misfortune to base souls

Is but a mark for scoffing and for scorn;

Nor do I marvel that this creature, like

Her fellows, was most insolent and rude;

I marvel thou canst find her worthy thee,

And that thy love—attempt not to gainsay it—

Thou lovest her——

THUM.

I? Well, yes! I like the girl.

She's pretty, very pretty, and beguiles

The dull hours——

THUSN. Do I hear aright? She is
Merely the plaything of thy idle hours?
Thou lovest her not, scarce feel'st respect for her?
In Germany, my son, they honour woman;
In each and all the rudest warriors prize
The mother who has borne them on her breast,
And in full faith expect prophetic words
From bashful maids' undesecrated lips!

THUM. Oh yes, in Germany, but we're in Rome.


THUSN. We are indeed, and there have been too long!—
Enough! As I have hitherto lived on
But for the joy of having you once more,
Turn we our thoughts to things of grave account!
For a great future lies before you now,
And on thy head, my son, and in thy hands
Have destinies been laid will shake the world!

THUM. Again you speak what I don't understand!

THUSN. In time thou wilt. At present only this!
What thou wert born, being Arminius' son,
Sigmar, thou knowest; now I fain would learn,
What, from my care estranged, thou hast become,
Whilst tended by my foes?

THUM. What I've become?
Tall, as you see, and strong in wind and limb!

THUSN. Thanks to the gods, that they have lent thee
strength,
A man's best heritage! But tell me, how
And to what uses Rome has trained thy strength?
To menial service? To the plough, perhaps?
Or in some workshop did she place thee, there
To learn some mean degrading handicraft?



THUM. I never fingered tool except the sword ;
To handle arms, that is the craft I learned !

THUSN. They trained thee as a warrior ? They ! In
this

I see your guiding hand, ye mighty gods !
You blind the man you purpose to destroy ;
You do not strike him down, you do but strew
A pebble in his path, you let him slip,
Then stumbling, by his own weight overborne,
Down, down he rolls amain to the abyss
Himself has cleft, anon to close him in !
Now they are ours ! Thanks, thanks, ye mighty gods !
Themselves they tied the scourge upon their backs,
Themselves they for their bosoms bared the knife ;
No longer you uphold them, they are lost.

Enter FLAVIUS ARMINIUS (L. centre).

FLA. Thusnelda !

THUSN. (*shuddering*). Woe is me !

THUM. What is the matter ?

THUSN. Did you not hear the voice that called my
name ?

But once I've heard that voice, and never, never,
Can I forget its deep-detested tones !

FLA. (*advances*). Thusnelda, hear me !

THUSN. (*turning slowly round to him*). It is he !
'Tis no .

Delusion ! Yes, 'tis he ! What wouldst with me,
Thou traitor, recreant to thy native land,
Shame of a noble stock, unworthy, base—


Thou in whose name Germania and Rome,
Treason and loyalty, slavery and freedom,
Combine and clash in discord most abhorred,—
What wouldst thou, Flavius Arminius? Speak!

FLA. I know my presence is unwelcome here!
When years ago to thee, my brother's wife,
On this same spot I offered kindly aid,
In wrath thou didst command me to be gone,
Didst curse me——

THUSN. Did to thee what thou hadst done
To my Arminius! As on Weser's strand,
Treating his noble earnest words with scorn,
Thou at thy brother's breast did launch thy spear,
So after thee I hurled my curse, and flung
All my abhorrence at thy feet! Begone!
I cried, and go thou didst. Why here again?

FLA. Not he, who then went from thee wild with rage—
I come again, an older, gentler man,
And I had hoped to find thee gentler too,
More just, more moderate,—not to the grave
Alone more near, but to right views as well.
For 'twas no wish of mine that parted us
Two brothers; no, the stream of destiny
Swept him away, and me it landed here!
And could his spirit now, from yonder heights,
Where truth abides and peace, descend to us,
And I, reposing perfect trust in thee,
Drew nigh to him, appeased as now he is——

THUSN. Thou liest! Thou wouldst tremble and
grow pale
Before his gaze, and hide thy face in fear



Before his light-illuminated lineaments ;
Dost doubt me—

*(Pointing to THUMELICUS, who has
meanwhile been standing apart.)*

Look ! Here is Arminius !

Now look into his eyes, if look thou dare !

FLA. *(covering his face with his hands)*. Arminius !
Ye eternal gods !

THUM. Look ! Mother, what's
This all about ? I'm sorry for the man !

THUSN. Be loving as the sun to all men, show
Pity to the wild beast thou hast struck down,
The foe that's at thy feet ; but to the traitor
No pity, none, but hate, remorseless hate !

FLA. Well, then, as thou art unappeasable——

THUSN. Yes, so I am, I am, and until death
Will to the vile be unappeasable !

FLA. Then expiation, shame, and penitence
Be henceforth banished from my soul ! Away !
You will not have my love, then have my hate !
Learn, then, the orders that the Cæsar sends !
To-morrow, in the Circus, 'tis his wish,
In princely robes, the oak-wreath in your hair,
That you be present at the games, which he
Has promised there——

THUSN. I ? I ? In princely robes ?
I, in the Circus ? Is this jest ? Or do
Thy words conceal some darker deadlier meaning ?

FLA. Segest's proud daughter is brought low at last !
Now learn this also ;—'tis the Cæsar's will,
This youngster here, thy son, to-morrow should

For the first time and in thy presence show
His skill to Rome, and to her Emperor.

THUSN. How! Show his skill? His skill? What
skill? You smile.

Speak, man of half-suggested words, what is
This threatened mischief? Speak it plainly out!

FLA. Thou know'st not then that Rome has spared
thy son,

As hundreds have been spared, only to make
His wounds and gashes and his streaming blood
A pastime for the populace of Rome?

Dost thou not know they learn to fight and slay

By rule, and make a business of their art,

And are named gladiators after it?

Dost know them not? Well (*pointing to THUMELICUS*),
see one here, who has

To fight to-morrow, and before thy face,

In German garb and arms, for death or life!

THUSN. For death or life! And in the German garb!

Sigmar, I don't believe him! Speak to me!

Art thou what this man says? Speak! Art thou?
Speak!

THUM. The man speaks truth! I am a gladiator!

THUSN. A gladiator—thou?

THUM. That's what I am! I fight
Both in the chariot and on horseback, and
Can hold my own with sickle or with net.
Ay, that I can! You just ask Glabrio!

THUSN. Arminius' son! (*hides her face in her hands;*
after a pause advances towards FLAVIUS.)

Thus then it is! Thou wilt

Not merely butcher in his mother's sight
 Thusnelda's and Arminius' son, but you
 Will robe him first,—base plotters as you are,—
 In German garb and German arms withal,
 That so you may to murder add disgrace,
 And, in dishonouring Arminius' line,
 Dishonour Germany, from which he sprang !
 This you are bent to do, but do shall not.
 The gods have set a different goal for us !
 Let Cæsar order, threaten as he will,
 For us a greater destiny's reserved,
 And brighter, nobler far, our end shall be !

FLA. Woman, thou'rt crazed ! When Cæsar gives
 command,

Who's he will venture to gainsay him ?

THUSN.

I !

Go tell thy lord, Thusnelda never shall,
 Robed for a holiday, go forth to see
 Her child's dishonour and her country's shame !
 And never shall this youth, Arminius' son,
 Equipped, in mockery, with his father's arms,
 Do battle in the Circus for his life !
 Never, I tell thee, never ! He is my son,
 And shall not fight——

THUM.

How ! I not fight ! Not fight !

Wilt drive me frantic ?

THUSN.

Oh ye eternal gods !

THUM. I not to fight, when Cæsar in his grace
 Has given me Këyx for my antagonist ?
 Not fight ? I craven-like to skulk at home,
 Whilst my companions in the Circus give


The death-salute triumphantly to Cæsar ?
Shall Këyx, Këyx point at me in scorn,
And flout me as a faintheart and poltroon ?
Not fight, not fight, indeed ? I'd sooner die !

FLA. (*aside*). Oh happy youth ! He does not feel
his shame !

THUSN. Sigmar,
'Tis meet that men be brave, and thou art brave,
And thou shalt prove thy valour too, I vow,
On this proud Rome, right gloriously and soon ;
Only not now ; thou shalt not waste thy strength
And bravery on base juggling shows like these !

THUM. What names are these ? Base juggling shows,
ye gods !

When Rome puts on her festal bravery—
When Cæsar, Senate, all the Roman knights,
In solemn order to the Circus wend,
Within whose vast expanse a surging sea
Of forms and voices has since sunrise roared—
When now at Cæsar's nod the lists are flung
Wide open to the combatants, and straight
A silence deep as death itself succeeds ;
And now the signal shrills, the blows fall thick—
One presses on, the other with a jerk
Clips his opponent's helmet in his net,
Who struggles free, and is enmeshed again—
Then striking now, now stricken, bleeds and reels,
And striking bares his bosom to the foe,
Receives his stroke, and makes an end ; and when,
As suddenly as bursts a storm-charged cloud,
Cheers, pealing thunder, shaking all the earth,



Re-echo round the victor's giddy head,
 And here rain roses down, and laurels there—
 The Cæsar nods applause, and "Victor, hail!"
 Rings from a thousand tongues through all the air!
 This nothing but a base, a juggling show?
 'Tis victory, ay, victory, glory, life!

THUSN. Thou dream'st of victory, deluded boy;
 Thou dost not see, to kill thee is their aim,
 To avenge the father's triumph on the son.
 And thou—thou couldst——

THUM. I am resolved to fight!

THUSN. And Germany, which thou dost load with
 shame,
 Thy father's name, which thou dost desecrate—
 Thy mother's hopes, which thou dost turn to tears,—
 Are these all nought? Art thou a gladiator,
 Because Rome called thee such, as such has trained
 thee?

Thou art Arminius' son, thou art a German,
 And thou art ours!

THUM. What's German, Roman? Pshaw!
 I am a gladiator; fighting is
 My trade; and if on Germany's account
 Thou art ashamed of my vocation, know,
 No less blush I to bear a German name,
 To be a mere barbarian; there! know that!
 And here I now, once and for all, renounce
 The name and kinship of my German race!
 In Rome, Rome I was born, Rome brought me up;
 I am——

THUSN. No more, unhappy boy, no more!

THUM. I am a Roman, Roman will remain !
And therefore get thee hence, and tell thy lord,
Thou Cæsar's messenger, that I will fight
To-morrow in the Circus, as he bids—
To conquer, if the gods vouchsafe success ;
To fall, if on my head their doom has passed ! (*Exit.*)

FLA. (*after a pause, to THUSNELDA, who stands with
her face hidden in her hands.*)

Thusnelda, though your hoarded rage at me
Lives onward unappeased within your heart,
From mine all wrath has vanished from this hour !
Speak of me as thou wilt, I will not blame thee ;
Plan what thou wilt, I will not stay thy hands ;
Farewell ! Though hardly thou hast dealt with me,
Distracted mother-heart, I pardon thee !

(*Exit up the stage, through the principal
entrance, L.*)

THUSN. I knew it well ! Shame is the fruit of weakness.

I should have died ! If now my son will turn,
Renouncing his own people, to our foes,
And recklessly disgrace his father's name,
Mine is the guilt ! Yet have no fear, Arminius,
Upon thy name disgrace shall never fall ;
Not thus, not thus thy son shall make an end !

(*As she turns to retire, the curtain falls.*)



ACT IV.

SCENE AS IN THE PREVIOUS ACT.

Enter MEROVIG and RAMIS through the principal entrance; THUSNELDA, coming through a side-door (R.), meets them.

THUSN. Right welcome, Merovig! You've kept your word,

And come most opportunely; oh, if only
The gods would make your coming turn to good!

MER. I hope they purpose so; 'tis good I bring;
I bring glad tidings of deliverance.
This very night our faithful band shall break
Into these walls, to carry you away!
The guards are all won over, horses near
To carry us in flight across the plains.
And once the Apennines are reached——

THUSN. Enough!

Too much! Before we think of harvesting,
Let us be certain that the seed is sown!

MER. There's something in thy look, so calm, so sad!
Can that be true, which Ramis told me of?

He would not yield to thee ; he would remain,
What Rome has made of him, a gladiator !

RAM. Yes, with our foes he sides ! In Roman hands
He has grown Roman !

THUSN. No ! He is German still,
In every heart-beat, every drop of blood
True German ! German constancy it is
He clings to Rome with, for Rome brought him up ;
German the courage urges him to fight,
German the whim that will be anything
Rather than German ! Yes, he is a German,
And just because he is one, that is why——

THUM. (*is heard without*). Io, Bacchus ! Fill high,
Lycisca !

THUSN. (*shuddering*). His voice !
How ! drinking-songs and clink of cups !

RAM. Just so !
Arminius' son holds revel, shouts and swills,
And lolls on downy pillows, with full cups,
His girl upon his breast !

THUSN. Let him swill on !
Let his impulsive nature, wild, untamed,
Break like the ocean's billows on the shore.
Let all the flower-blooms from the tree of life
Come showering to the ground, and all at once ;
Let youth's fresh springs steam out in bubbling jets,
'Tis fermentation ripens noble wine !

MER. Ay, were it manly force, not boyish folly,
Were it true vigour, bubbling over, not
Mere feebleness, that wallows in the mire ;
For where the spirit soars not, hope is vain !

THUSN. You're wroth with him, misjudge him, both of you !

And wherefore are you wroth ? Because at first
He treated me so rudely ? Think ! He is
A gladiator, and, as such, is he
Not bound to fight, and triumph if he can ?
Then, was it strange, he broke into a rage ?
Or would not sacrifice the things he prized,
When scorn was all I offered him instead ?
But when your purpose is unveiled, and he
Is shown a people,—nay, a host of peoples,
All Germany,—sworn in fealty to his flag,
When I appeal to him to do great deeds,—
The meanest sure of immortality,—
Then from his eyes the blinding scales will fall—
For man grows greater with a great career—
Then will he feel, both who and what he is——

LYCISCA *is heard singing without, to the accompaniment
of a lute—*

*“Burning kisses, spicy wine !
Now the grape's red blood to sip,
Now the purple of thy lip !
Burning kisses, spicy wine
Make a mortal half divine !”*

THUMELICUS *is heard singing in chorus—*

“Make a mortal half divine !”

Io, Bacchus, Io !

THUSN. (*aside*). Woe's me ! These sounds have sent
A chill into my heart ! Oh, if false Rome

So wholly has enervated his soul,
So through and through envenomed all his heart,—
No, come what may, whate'er the hours may bring,
Not by my son shall Germany be shamed !

MER. (*after a pause*). Time presses ! We must settle
on our course.

THUSN. Ramis ! go call my son to me ! And look
About, that no one plays the spy on us !

(*Exit RAMIS, L.H.*)

MER. I could have wished thou hadst not until now
Concealed from him the object brought me here !
The games come off to-morrow ; instant flight
Alone can save him ; should he hesitate,
Turn a deaf ear to all that we can urge——

THUSN. The heavens, I hope, will smile upon our
task !

MER. Hope, say'st thou ? then thou fearest ! Not till
hope

Abandons men, do they appeal to heaven ;
And didst thou really in thy son believe——

THUSN. I in the gods believe, and, come what will,
I will not hold my country's cause for lost !—
He's here ! Quick ! Step aside !

THUM. (*entering with RAMIS, L.*) The pestilence
Gnaw up thy bones ! I am to come ! Old hag,
And where am I to come to, and to whom ?

RAM. There is thy mother, let her answer thee !

THUSN. Come nearer, Sigmar !

THUM. Now, what is it ? Speak !
But, pray you, make it short ! I have some guests,
Or rather, I'm invited as a guest,

What is it? Speak!

THUSN.

THUM.

THUSN.

How !

THUM. The man there? Why, whom should I take
him for,

But some one whom the Cæsar has sent here,
To let me see him in the dress which I
To-morrow in the Circus am to wear?

THUSN. Unworthy error, shameful as the life
Which Rome has made thee lead ! Deluded boy,
now, 'tis thy father's brother-in-arms, whom there
thou seest before thee, who to reach there took
service in Rome's Teutonic Cohort ; he,
he is the help that Germany sends thee, he
thy deliverer.

MER. And what's more than all,
true friend, even as to thy sire he was !

THUM. A friend, deliverer ! What stuff you talk !

MER. My prince!—for such, after thy father's death, seem'st to us Cheruskans meet to call thee—
My prince, I am sent by Germany, and she calls
to thee through me: "Up! think upon the shame


That I have suffered in Arminius' line ;
Son of a hero, grasp thy father's sword,
And, in avenging them, avenge thy native land !”

THUSN. Dost comprehend, my son ? They call to
thee,
The tribes that dwell 'twixt Danube and the Rhine,
On from the Spessart to Carpathia's hills,
'Tis all vast Germany that calls to thee !
Up ! the cry echoes like a thunder-peal,
Swords clash, and trumpets mingle with the call,
“ Up, up, Arminius' son ! avenge thyself,
And, doing that, avenge, avenge us all !”

MER. The princes, with the peoples, wait for thee.
Stand forth among them ! Only lift thy hand,
One glance from thee, and they are up in arms !
To work, then ! We must fly this very night.

THUM. Has the wine got into my brain, and set
It spinning round—or are you mad ? I fly !
I rouse the tribes of Germany to arms !

THUSN. Dost quail ? Thou say'st thou art a gladiator,
And fighting thy vocation ; now then, show
What thou canst do ! Let Rome—this haughty Rome,
That, under all its ivory and gold
Which charm thee, is but crumbling rottenness ;
This vast imperial Rome, that bends beneath
A madman's rule ; Rome, that no more believes
In its gods, or in itself ; Rome, that has held
Us both in chains, made thee a gladiator,
And now is bent on murdering thee,—let Rome
Be thy antagonist, strike home at her,
Down with her to the dust ! Rome, vanquish Rome ?



THUM. Pshaw! Ask me to fetch down the moon
from heaven!

'Twere just as easy. Who e'er vanquished Rome?

MER. We smote her in the Teutoburger Forest!

THUSN. How! deem'st thou us too weak? Then
follow us,

Come to our forests! Learn there to be free,
And to prize freedom; there see justice rule—
Not mere caprice as here—and truth,—here all
Is treachery and lies! There ripen to
A man 'mongst men; feel, comprehend, that we
Are now what these around us here were once,
And hurl Rome down,—for ours, ours is the world!

THUM. And wherefore Rome? What ill has Rome
e'er done

To me, or Germany what good, that I
For Germany should fall to feud with Rome?
What's Germany to me?

THUSN. How, boy! the land
For which thy father bled—the land in which
Thou'rt born to empire, a Cheruscan prince!
Dost thou renounce thy birthright?

MER. Can it be?
How! Shut thine eyes when thy home beckons
thee;

Close up thine ears when she, thy mother, calls!
Thou canst, thou wilt not——

THUM. Wherefore can I not?
If Germany, my mother, as you say,
Through twenty years took neither thought of me,
Nor of her there, that was Arminius' wife,

Why, in the name of all the gods, should I
Not turn my back upon this raven mother?
What's Germany to me, I ask again?
I am no German, no Cheruscan prince;
I was, and am, and ever will remain,
Thumelicus, the gladiator of Ravenna.

THUSN. (*after a pause, turning to MEROVIG*). Speak
thou to him—I have no more to say.

MER. Were I a man that in a splash of words
Forgets the core of things, by Thor's sledge-hammer
Home would I go, and leave thee here to be
A gladiator to thy heart's content!
But thou'rt Arminius' son, the only man
Might fuse our German forces into one;
And therefore I still tarry, and implore,
Do not, because thou'rt wroth with Germany,
Forget thyself, but, for thine own sake, do
What thou'dst not do for us! We offer thee
An army, power, command, to win for thee
The purple of the Cæsars! Do not spurn
What ne'er will come again! Become our chief,
And Rome obeys thee, and the world is thine!

THUM. Power and command!—The purple of the
Cæsars!

Why, that's worth listening to, and, sooth to say,
I'll think about it. For to-day, enough!
Now I must go. We shall speak more of this
Some fitter time. To-morrow, or——

MER. To-morrow?
Does not to-morrow find you in the lists,
And shouldst thou——

THUM. Fall? that's what you mean? No, no;
Conquer I must, and shall!

MER. Fool! If thou didst,
Dost thou suppose thou then shouldst have a choice?
Dost fondly fancy, Germany would e'er
Choose for her people's leader him who fought,
Dishonourably fought, a serf with serfs,—
The man to whom the populace of Rome
Flung chaplets in the Circus? Choose to-day,
Choose now or never! Later 'tis too late!

THUM. Dishonourably! How! Dishonourably! All
Because I am a gladiator! I!
And for you Germans, who with folded hands
Have calmly let me grow to what I am!
Is not Aurelian a Roman knight?
Valens a military tribune now?
And what were these but gladiators too?—
And I, by you barbarians, savages,
Am to be scouted as dishonourable?
Well, then, give ear, and mark me once for all!
Never will I the Germans' leader be!
Though ye for me should win the universe,
Though Germany lay imploring at my feet——

THUSN. (*waving back MEROVIG, who has advanced in
violent emotion*). Stay! Germany never did, nor
ever shall,
Lie at the foot of any he that lives,
To beg of him to be her lord and chief!
Never shall Germany entreat! But I,
Thy mother, I beseech thee, O my son—
I, that in sorrow brought thee forth, in grief

Did suckle thee, and in despair's dark hour
Did lose thee—I, my son, implore thee now,
Make not the day that gave thee back to me
More bitter than the day that saw my loss !
Betray me not, my dearest, fondest hope ;
Spare me the last, the deadliest of pangs !
Oh, let me not survive my only child !
For, fight to-morrow, fall away from us,
And from that hour thou to my heart art dead !
Far sooner would I see thee cold and stark,
A gashed and mangled corpse, than that thy head,
At once dishonoured and with victory crowned,
Should bear aloft the gladiator's wreath !

*(After a pause, approaches THUMELICUS,
who stands with his face averted.)*

Thou'rt wroth, my son! Yet not with me shouldst thou
Be wroth! I lived for thee, ay, lived when death
Offered me fame and freedom ; then live now
For me! Repay the sacrifice I made !
Thou wear'st thy father's lineaments,—belie
Them not! Fair art thou, be in soul as fair !
Be thou a man, no gladiator churl ;
And as thy birth proclaims thee for our own,
Be ours indeed! Come! *(Seizing his hand.)*

'Twas denied to me,

To lead the feeble footsteps of the boy,
Now let me be the guide unto the man !
Come, Sigmar, come !

THUM. *(spurning her hand).* No, no! I tell thee, no !

THUSN. Go, then !

THUM. I will! Call me not back again,

Nor hope to make me change, no, not one jot,
For what I've said I've said for good and all!

(Exit by the side-door, L.)

MER. *(after a pause, approaching THUSNELDA)*. Thus-
nelda!

THUSN. Go thou too!

MER. Not without thee!

He chooses his own fate, then let him have it,
The rattle of his chains to him is music;
But thou, whose soul has need of liberty,
Come with me to thy people, to thy home!

THUSN. Speak not of me! A grave is all I need!
Save him, my son! To-night break with thy friends
Into the house here,—carry him away
With your strong thews and sinews; set him free
By force!

MER. Who ever was made free by force?
Who would be free, must long for freedom, and
A slave in soul's a slave be where he may!

THUSN. Dost by Arminius' son refuse to stand?

MER. By his son, no! by the gladiator, yes!
To take him with me, were to carry home
Poison, not healing,—not the tie to bind,
Rather the knife to sever! Let me lead
Thee with me homewards, be it mine to show
Thy countenance to those that waver still—

THUSN. No! Do thy duty, leave me to do mine!
Here I remain. Away! But, back at home,
Tell them, whilst they in council sat, and paused
And pondered, a most noble spirit here
In slavery's stress and thralldom dire was wrecked!

Tell them, they came to a resolve too late,
And warn them, lest this same "Too late! Too late!"
Prove through all after-time our country's curse!
Not one word more! Go! Leave me!

MER.

I obey!

(Exit up the stage, L.)

THUSN. He's gone!—I hear his tread—and now all, all
Is over! He will fight to-morrow, fall
And die, unto his own eternal shame,
Blurring his sire's and country's honour both!
Am I to look on calmly? Let him sink,
Till I have tried my uttermost to save him?
Yet what to do? Appeal to Flavius? No!
From treason what but mischief can ensue?
Ye eternal gods, to you I call for aid!
Night lies upon my path, mist clouds mine eyes,
My brain is paralysed; one only thought
Burns like a fire deep down within my soul;
My son shall never be his country's shame!

LYCISCA *(heard singing without)*.

*" Burning kisses, spicy wine,
Juice of grape, and mingling kisses,
Fire the blood with twofold blisses;
Burning kisses, spicy wine,
Make a mortal half divine !"*

THUMELICUS *(also heard without)*.

" Make a mortal half divine !"

Io, Bacchus, Io!

THUSN. Ye eternal gods!

T

Yes! In these sounds ye answer to my call!
Love holds him fast, and love must rescue him.
I must ally myself with her! Woe's me!
I am to—I, Thusnelda—oh, proud heart,
Dost quail? Imperious spirit, that scarce bowed
Even to the gods themselves, dost thou rebel?
Thou wouldst recoil, resist?—Ah, learn to stoop!
Thy son's life's in the balance! Learn to beg,
To kneel, and all thy shame be this, that thou
Didst for a moment shrink from such abasement.

*Enter LYCISCA from the side-door, L., speaking back
into the room she has left.*

LYC. That must do for to-day! To-morrow more!
You shan't come with me! Stay! I'll shut you in!
THUSN. (*going up to her*). Grant me a single word
before you go!
LYC. You, is it? Here's a joke! What! speak to me!
THUSN. Speak to thee? Ay, beseech thee! How-
soe'er
Unused to such a thing—I will beseech thee!
LYC. Me! beseech me! You, you a princess, me?
THUSN. If my pride has offended thee, the gods,
Thou seest, have avenged thee—Then be warned
By my example—Meet me kindly, gently,
And hear with pity what a mother's heart
Cries out in its despair! Oh save my son!
LYC. How! Save thy son? Can I believe my ears?
THUSN. The games are near; to-morrow is too late.
Let him not tread the Circus' hateful sand!

Your tears I know he never will resist—
He will obey, if you conjure him, you,
To fly, this very day, this very night !
In vain a future, noble, crowned with fame,
Awaits him in the mother-arms of home ;
He spurns the happiness awaits him there !
Teach him to comprehend it, feel it ; use
Thy influence—he loves thee, loves but thee !

LYC. His, his a future noble, crowned with fame ?

THUSN. Escape with us, and share his destiny !
There thou shalt lord it, rule as princess ; here
Thou art a slave ! His welfare, life's at stake—
If thou dost love him, save him then, oh save him !

LYC. (*deeply moved, and half aside*). Oh, if 'twere
possible ! Were there a way
Out of the depths of my degraded lot !
I lord it, I to rule as princess there,
Cast off my old life, and forget my shame ?
Forget it ? Can the world, can I myself
Forget what has been ? What all men have known,
Can that be hid ? Impossible ! No, no !

THUSN. Thou doubttest ? Do not doubt ! I pray
to thee,

As to the gods themselves ! A gentle smile
To tell me that thou wilt ! Thou must, thou must !

LYC. My heart aches for thee ! How am I to say,
What must be hard, how soft soe'er my words ?
In sooth, I dare not. Shall I ? Yes, I must
Speak out ! Thy hope is but a dream, thy prayer
Impossibility. Ah, not for me,
Nor for thy son, is rescue possible !

THUSN. No rescue possible ! When even now
All's ready for our flight, true friends at hand
To bear us home ? No, no, I do not dream ;
'Tis but thy fear. Nothing's impossible
To woman's love, or to a man's resolve !

LYC. Ay, there, deluded one, the mischief lies !
I am no woman, a poor flower-girl I.
We love not, neither are we loved ! And he !
He is a gladiator, not a man ;
The scourge instructed him ; he can obey,
But not resolve. Whate'er the destiny
His home may offer, glorious and pure,
He lacks the eye that sees at once what's right,
The soul that presses forward, the staunch heart
That never flags till it achieves its task !
And I—enough of words ! Learn this ; she, who
Has sunk like me, can only—go on sinking !
THUSN. Art stung with shame ? Well, then, revenge
thyself !

Is thy life flecked with spots ? then wash them off
With Roman blood ! The weapons are prepared,
And hosts stand ready to obey thy nod !
Come, follow us ; save—save my son, and Rome
Shall pay thee for the wrongs she wrought on thee.

LYC. Say, can revenge give back what I have lost ?
And you barbarians, would you scorn me less
Than do the sons of Rome ? No, no. If e'er
It be decreed by fate that I shall rule,
'Tis here in Rome, not in your forest shades ;
And if shame be my lot, at least Rome proffers
The bitter portion in a golden bowl.

THUSN. And he—my son!—who, who shall save my son?

Of all that live on earth, thou only canst.

Look on my sorrow, let a mother's prayers

Subdue thee—else I must—yes, yes, I must!

(Falls at her feet.) Behold me here a suppliant at thy feet!

Have pity on me! Pity! Do not leave

The last shoot of a noble stem distraught,

To perish in the Circus like a beast.

Lyc. Stand up! Kneel not to me! It nor beseems
Thyself nor touches me! Be not alarmed.

No word shall 'scape my lips of what thou'st said.

Nay, more! Secure his freedom, if thou canst,

And take him home; but hope no aid from me.

If Fate shall seize on thee with ruthless hands,

And drag thee down into the mire of woe,

As though thou hadst been born in it, like us,

I will not aid, yet will I not prevent!

Even misery yearns for fellowship, and if

To sink must be my doom, drown thou as well!

(Exit up the stage, L.)

THUSN. Lost, lost, all lost, beyond retrieval lost!

No mind to counsel, and no hand to aid!

Yes, she-wolf Rome, thou hast us in thy gripe;

The soul, that did not stifle in thy chains,

Perverts to poison underneath thy yoke.

Thou mak'st thy myrmidons of those who are

Worthless as slaves, so chainest down them all!

Woe's me, a woman wofully accursed,

Who in her bosom bore my country's shame!

Woe, that I brought her blight into the world !
Oh that the wheels of time would roll back, back,
Year after year, day after day, until
That hour should come again, the hour when I
Dropped, as I stood before Germanicus,
The hand was raised against myself, because
I found a second life within me stir.

Oh, were that hour but given to me again !

RAMIS (*enters from the back, L., with a wreath of oak-leaves, and carrying a purple mantle on her arm*).

A slave of Cæsar's met me at the gate
And asked—Thusnelda, dost thou hear ?

THUSN.

What is it ?

RAM. Know, then, a slave of Cæsar's asked for thee,
And bade me take to thee this oaken wreath
And purple robe ! 'Tis Cæsar's wish thou shouldst
Appear to-morrow in the Circus games
Arrayed in them !

THUSN.

The Cæsar wishes that !

RAM. Thou art, so said the slave, on no account
To come without the wreath of oaken leaves ;
For Cæsar wishes every eye should view
Germania personified in thee ;
Therefore the oak-leaves must not be forgot !

THUSN. I am to be Germania ?

RAM.

So he said.

THUSN. Oh that in sooth I were Germania,
With all Germania's courage in my soul,
With all Germania's anger in mine eye,
And all her giant vigour in mine arm !
Then, craven-hearted Rome, then shouldst thou quake

Down to the core of the sustaining earth !
Then—hark ! Who speaks ? What voice rings in my
ears ?

Or does it speak within me ? “Up ! accept
Germania’s wreath, and do what she would do
To keep its noble leaves unstained and pure !
Back dost thou long to roll the wheels of time ?
Well, then, we give that day to thee again,
And see thou use it better than before !”

(Puts out her hand to take the wreath.)

Germania I will be ! Give me the wreath !
(Recoils.) No, hence ! The leaves are bloody. Hence !

RAM.

It is

The reflex of the purple cloak, Thusnelda !
What ails thee ? Calm thyself !

THUSN.

Be still, my heart,

And summon all thy strength, world-weary soul !—
How ran the vow, which to the gods I made,
So they vouchsafed to place some high behest,
Some task of mighty import in my hands ?
“I will fulfil it !” yes, these were my words—
I will fulfil it ; and, if fail I may,
I’ll break, as breaks the oak before the blast,
But bend I will not, ever ! So it was !

(Seizing the wreath and placing it on her head.)

Come then, Germania’s wreath, and rustle here
A Teutoburger Forest round my brows !

RAM. What is thy purpose ? Speak !

THUSN.

To keep my word !

(As she goes out with RAMIS, the curtain falls.)

ACT V.

Scene same as in previous Act. In the foreground, R., a couch, with the head of it so placed that any one lying on it looks towards the back of the stage ; over the lower end of it a green coverlet has been thrown, and a pole fixed, upon which a kind of trophy, composed of various pieces of armour, a helmet with vulture's wings, a shield decorated with bosses, a short sword, and a bearskin, are being arranged by slaves under GLABRIO'S direction.

GLABRIO. Set up the helmet here above the shield !
Now here the sword ! That's right ! quite right ! And now
We're ready ! So be off, and, look you, see
That all's kept quiet, that no sudden noise
Can find its way into the chamber here,
To scare him from the sleep he needs so much !
These are your orders, so away and mind them !

(As the slaves retire, contemplating the trophy.)

'Faith, a fine suit of arms ! Clumsy a bit,
No doubt, and heavy, showy though, and quaint,
Just what your young fools like ! I'm pretty sure,
They'll please his fancy : but time's running on,

The hour appointed for the games is near !
Where is the youngster loitering ?

(*Sees LYCISCA, who enters from the side-door, L.*)

Here she comes,

My purple rose-bud ! Well, how goes it on ?
What, since I left him, has he been about ?

LYC. He had a bath, then breakfasted——

GLAB. And now ?

LYC. Anoints himself, and puts his hair all straight.

GLAB. But what condition is he in ? I mean,
How does he look and talk and bear himself ?

LYC. Oh, brisk, as he were going to a dance !

GLAB. A fine young fellow that ! In very sooth,
It almost makes me sad——

LYC. That Diodorus
Is chosen for his antagonist ? Does that
Still hold ?

GLAB. It does ! and Diodorus has
His orders not to spare him.

LYC. Then his death
Is certain, eh ?

GLAB. His death ? Why, who knows that ?

LYC. You know it well !

GLAB. Tush, child ! don't fret.

LYC. Me fret !

Alas ! I feel that I should envy him !

GLAB. What's this, wench ? Envy him ! What
nonsense ! Yet

You look quite pale ; you're feverish, you are ill——

LYC. In truth, I know not what's come over me !
It very often happens with me, that

I tumble from a state of mad delight
Heels over head into the deadliest dumps,
And hug to-day what yesterday I spurned.
Mere idle fancies !

GLAB. Ay, wench, nothing more !
Begot of stagnant blood and heated liver !
I'll send for Simon, the old Jew, and he
Will put you straight ! But see, here comes the lad !
So, then, be off ; he must not meet you now !
You're out of sorts, and seeing you might damp
His spirits ! Go, child, to the market-place,
And there see to your flowers !

Lyc. See to my flowers !
You're right ! What boots to swim, no shore in view ?
No, better sink, and in the whelming flood
Find quiet and a long forgetfulness !

(Exit up the stage, L.)

GLAB. What's in the wench's head! Is her heart
touched
By the young fellow really? Pah! she has
No heart! Yet what else can it be? Humph! What
But silly youth that, overjoyed for nought,
Frets for mere nought, and is with nought appeased?
She'll be herself again ere eventide!

Enter THUMELICUS from the side-door, L., in a short tunic, his arms bare almost to the shoulders, with the sword of ARMINIUS at his girdle.

THUM. Here I am, Glabrio !

GLAB. And high time too !
The fight will soon be on, and you, my boy,

Must rest a bit, and get your strength well up !
You know the saw—

*“ Swordsman, rest before the fight
Then you strike with triple might.”*

THUM. Oh yes, I know it !

GLAB. Act upon it, then !

There in your little room it is too close,
So I have had a couch placed for you here ;
Here it is cool, and yonder curtain, see,
Will keep the sun from striking on your eyes !

THUM. Thanks, thanks, good Glabrio !

GLAB. And just look here !

I've had your weapons carefully laid out.
How do you like them, eh ? The skin, the casque,
With vulture's wings ; ha ! don't it flash and gleam ?
Why, you'll look like the God of War himself !

THUM. Oh, German arms ! Again this mockery !
Well !

Of the bear's claws ye wolves had best beware !

GLAB. Right ! give it them well home ! For every
word


Deal out a swashing blow ! Right, right, my lad !
Now make yourself quite comfortable ! Come,
Unloose your belt. Why do you lug about
This clumsy whinger ? Sure, you never dream
Of entering the arena, man, with that ?

THUM. My mother thought——

GLAB. Pah ! Let your mother think !
That short blade will not do !

(Takes off the sword and lays it on the couch.)

Away with it !



And now to sleep, to sleep! I'll wake you up,
And arm you, when they come.

THUM. Come! When they come!
And who are coming, then?

GLAB. Who coming? Why,
Who but the Cæsar, who in person means
To come and fetch your mother and yourself,
And to the Circus to conduct you both
With festal music, and in solemn state.

THUM. Cæsar himself?

GLAB. Himself! Never before
To gladiator was such favour shown;
So in the Circus prove you merit it!

THUM. That will I, never fear!

GLAB. I've stinted you
Neither in sturdy blows nor good advice,
So, hark you, do me credit now! Be cool
And confident. To feel that you will win
Is half the victory. Watch your opponent's eye,
See what he means, before he stirs his hand——

THUM. I know, I know!

GLAB. Just one thing more!

THUM. What's that?

GLAB. When falling—understand me right, you won't,
But it might chance,—in falling, should you feel
Yourself hard hit—a serious wound—remember
To drop on your left knee, your left knee, mind,
And, stretching out your right leg, mark me, thus,
Let your left arm upon your body rest,
And, bending back with a fine showy grace,
Await the final stroke.

THUM. Make your mind easy !
Oh, I know all the business !

GLAB. Good, then, good !
So farewell for the present ! I must hence,
To see about the others ! Now lie down,
And rest till I return.

THUM. If you see Këyx,
Who's chosen, I know, for my antagonist——

GLAB. And you know that ?

THUM. If you should see the cur,
Tell him to do his very best to-day,
For, best or worst, this day shall be his last !

GLAB. (*as he is going out, and closing the curtain across
the principal entrance*).

Good ! He shall have your message ! Lie you down.
Tut, tut, be quick ! I'll wake you in good time !

(*Exit behind the curtain.*)

THUM. A little snatch of sleep ! And wherefore not ?
A few brief winks can do no harm ; last night
I could not sleep for thinking of the games !

(*Sits down upon the couch, and leans his
head upon his hand.*)

How evenly my life has passed till now !
The fighting-school, sound whippings, now and then
A scrap of praise, mutton to eat at noon,
So one day glided by,—so thousands did !
And now in some few hours how much has chanced !
Këyx's lies, the jeers of my companions,
The coming fight for life, that messenger
From Germany, and now the Cæsar's self
Who takes us to the games ! My head is all

A-spin ! And this is why I was so harsh,
 So savage to my mother ! Oh, I do
 So long to get some rest ! the day is hot,
 And thinking makes one drowsy—

*(Observes THUSNELDA, who appears at the side-door,
 in a white robe, with a purple mantle, and an
 oak wreath in her hair ; he springs up, and
 advances to her.)*

Ha ! see there !

'Tis thou ! I did not hear thee come, but thou
 Art come, I think, to herald my success,
 For, as the song says, Joy comes light of foot,
 And Bliss is winged with air !

THUSN.

'Tis winged indeed !

THUM. How beautiful thou art ! How stately shows
 Thy wreath ! how brilliantly the purple flames !
 These trappings are well timed, for Cæsar's self
 Intends to lead us to the games in state.
 We must not shame him, must we ?

THUSN.

Nor ourselves.

THUM. These are the weapons, see, I am to wear !

THUSN. Oh, speak not of the future as 'twere past ;
 The future to the gods pertains !

THUM.

One word.

I am, so Glabrio says, to keep quite quiet,
 But first all must be clear between us. You
 Are wroth with me, I see, for yesterday ;
 You're wroth, because we follow different roads,
 Because what I have been I must remain !
 Nay, be not wroth ! Thy counsel may be wise,
 Thy road the better one ; but can I therefore

Walk in it? can I be what I am not?
Were I the man for these great schemes of yours,
No doubt I'd feel the impulse for them too.
I don't! A gladiator I will be,
The foremost of my peers, and of the time.
Worthy of thee I'll prove myself as such;
And, let him try his utmost, can a man
Be better or more perfect than he is?
So pardon, not *what* yesterday I said,
But *how* I said it; that which I've resolved,
I cannot help, so therefore hate me not!

THUSN. Hate thee! This heart can wither in its woe,
It can despair, can nourish murderous thoughts—
But hate thee—hate my child! Eternal gods,
Ye witness if I hate him!

THUM. That's all right,
So let my fortune find me my own way;
The thing that is, it is; the gods so will it.

THUSN. Can nothing, nothing turn or hold thee
back?

Is, then, thy purpose fixed to fight to-day?

THUM. How often must I tell you? I will fight!

THUSN. The future to the gods pertains! Proceed!

THUM. Resign yourself to the inevitable,
And be no longer wroth! Give me your hand,
Let us not part in anger.

THUSN. Part! No, no;
We go the self-same road. Not in farewell,
But as thy guide I give my hand to thee,
As thy companion kiss thee, to my heart
Enfold thee, and if e'er a blessing lay

In tears, such blessing overflows thee now.
 Why was I doomed, ye gods, to lose him? Why,
 Lost for so long, to find him thus again?

(Pushing him from her.)

Enough! Away!

THUM. I understand you not,
 And never shall, I fancy! But the time
 Is slipping by, and I must rest! I need it!

(Flings himself upon the couch.)

Oh, yet there's something! Keep my sword for me!

THUSN. Arminius' sword? Thou givest it me thyself?

THUM. You'll keep it for me, eh? for Glabrio vows
 It's quite unfit for the arena!

THUSN. For
 The arena—yes, for that 'tis quite unfit.

THUM. *(pointing to the sword upon the couch).* Here
 'tis, and mind you take good care of it.
 And now, I've nothing more to say.

(Letting his head drop.)

Sleep, sleep,

Now take me hence!

THUSN. *(turning away).* Ay, sleep, sleep!

THUM. Going? How!
 No, stay, you don't disturb me! Stay, and if
 You know a song, a pretty one, you may
 Sing me to sleep.

THUSN. I know no songs!

THUM. Have you
 Forgotten them? You knew some well of old!
 Upon my eyelids hangs a weight of lead.
 How ran that song, Lycisca, yesterday?—

*"Burning kisses—spicy wine—
Juice of grape—and mingling kisses—
Burning kisses—all divine—" (Falls asleep.)*

THUSN. (*after a pause, returns to the side of the couch.*)

The hour's at hand, and what is to be done
Must be done now! He sleeps! How sweet, how still!
How often has he lain on this same spot,
A rosy infant on my breast, whilst I
Have lulled his sleep, and covered up his face
When the chill night-winds swept along these halls,
And if a fly came I have brushed it off,
And waked him if ill dreams disturbed his sleep!
And now I stand beside him threatening ill,
My hand uplifted, and my purpose steeled
To cut him off in his youth's perfect bloom,
Even as a withered bough from the tree of life!
The wild beast of the woods fights for her young,
The snake bites if you pluck the rose away,
And I—Yes, I will kill the innocent sleep;
I, I, a mother, murder my own child!

(Rushes to the front of the stage.)

No, no, ye righteous gods! Give back my vow—
I cannot pay it—give it me again!
I cannot, where I gave, take life away,
Nor murder, murder, where I'm bound to love!

(After a pause, returns to the couch.)

Whither, perturbèd spirit, dost thou stray?
What would I now, but, as in that old time,
To shield thee from the winter frost of life,
To wake thee from existence' troublous dream,
To guard thee from the fly-swarm of the passions,

Which come to all men, even the happiest ?
What but to shield thee from the deathblow, dealt
By a vile butcher's mercenary hands ?
No, Sigmar, no !—If that this trembling hand

(Seizes the sword, which is lying on the couch.)

Strikes to thy heart, it is not hatred ; no,
'Tis love, ay, love, that little recks to ask
How bitter is the potion, so it save,
And therefore—

(Raises the sword to strike, but recoils, and lets it fall.)

No ! I cannot !

*(Drops on her knees, while music is heard at a distance of
a gay Festival March, which gradually comes nearer.)*

Ye eternal gods !

If for my country's weal ye claim his life,
Then take it ! Let the atmosphere he breathes
Be turned to poison ; bid the earth to quake,
That these walls toppling may entomb us both ;
Blast us to ashes with your lightning's fires !
The power is yours ! Accomplish your high wills !
But in my hands place not his destiny,
Demand not from the mother her son's blood !

(Listens, and then starts up.)

Hark ! what was that ? If mine ear cheats me not,
'Tis music ! 'Tis—it is Caligula.
They come to fetch him. The thronged Circus heaves
And roars ! Rome claims her gladiator, but
I will not give him up. I am a woman,
Helpless and weak, but will not give him up.
See ! who shall tear him from me ?

(Snatches up the sword.)

If, ye gods
That dwell on high, ye will not launch your bolts,
So be it, then I will guard my country's honour !
Sport on, sport on in revelry and mirth !
Around my brows the oaken chaplet stirs,
I am Arminius' wife—a German, I,—
And these I was before I was a mother.
You claim Thumelicus, the gladiator ?
Sigmar, my son is called, mine, mine he is,
And mine he shall remain unto the last.
Here with this blow I strike his fetters off ! (*Stabs him.*)

THUM. Woe's me !—that Këyx—Mother——

(*Falls back and dies.*)

THUSN.

O my child !

(*Veils her face in her mantle with her left hand ;
her right drops, holding the sword.*)

GLAB. (*without*). Up, up, Thumelicus ! (*Throwing
back the curtain.*) Wake up, my lad !

(*Enters.*) They're coming—it is time ! (*Advancing and
taking down the helmet from the trophy.*) Be quick,
be quick !

Get on your weapons !—How, he does not hear !
Shake him up, woman, will you, till he wakes !

(*THUSNELDA remains as before.*)

Ha ! are you both deaf, you ? Must I myself
Rouse up the youngster ?

(*Advances to the right side of the couch,
and takes hold of THUMELICUS.*)

Up, old fellow ! How—

Is't possible ? (*Dropping the helmet.*) Blood !
(*Rushing towards the principal entrance.*)

Help, ho ! Come hither ! Help !
*(Returns, bends over THUMELICUS, while guards,
 gladiators, and slaves rush in at the back.)*

APEX. What's up ?

GNIPHO. You called for us ?

KËYX. What is the matter, speak ?

GLAB. In vain ! Life utterly extinct ! He's gone !

*Enter FLAVIUS ARMINIUS, followed by CASSIUS and
 several senators and knights.*

FLA. Who was it called for help ?

CASS. What's gone amiss ?

GLAB. Look for yourselves, and judge ! There he
 lies dead,

My handsome gladiator dead !

FLA. Sigmar !

Arminius' son !

GLAB. Slain, treacherously slain !

CASS. And who has slain him ?

*Enter MARCIUS in the background with GALLUS,
 preceding CALIGULA.*

MAR. Make way, there ! Room, room !

GALL. Room for the Cæsar !

*Enter CALIGULA in festal array, a wreath of roses on
 his head, leading CÆSONIA by the hand, attended by
 PISO, VALERIUS, and other senators and knights.*

CALIG. Is all Rome gone mad ?

Why do the people stare, and block the way?
Why has the music stopped? I charge you, speak!
What is the matter here? Who is that youth?
Now, by mine anger, answer me!

GLAB. My lord,
He, lying in his blood there, is Thumelicus,
My finest gladiator.

CÆS. How! Thumelicus!

CALIG. Arminius' son, that to my palate was
What gave these games their zest! Knave, is it thus
You keep my gladiators in your charge?

GLAB. I'm innocent, my lord!

CALIG. Who's guilty, then?
Who was it struck him down?

THUSN. (*who till now has stood veiled and immovable,
letting her mantle drop*). 'Twas I that did it!

FLA. Oh my prophetic spirit!

CALIG. How! Thusnelda!
Thou—thou hast taken thy son's life? And why?

THUSN. Why? Know'st thou not? Well, I will tell
thee why!

In two poor prisoners—a woman and
A gladiator—thou didst think to make
Triumphant mockery of my native land,
And from safe distance here to put to shame
Arminius' people in his kith and kin!
I was to play Germania, such thy thought,
And see my son struck down before my eyes;
But I, though shocked and shuddering the while,
I did not play, I *was* Germania!
My son must never taint his mother's name,

His sire's renown, the honour of our home.
I offered up, I, with a priestess' hands,
His youth a sacrifice to our dread gods !
My people's honour I was bound to save.
I am a woman, weak, and held in chains ;
And therefore, Cæsar, therefore slew I him !

CALIG. (*whilst FLAVIUS, who has hitherto been looking on in deep emotion, suddenly leaves the stage*).

It was to spite me, then ! Thou dust, thou worm,
Didst dream to spoil this festival of mine ?
Then tremble, for I yet will have my sport—
Have it in thee, now that thy son is gone !

THUSN. Let those who fear thee tremble ! My fear
died

With him there ! Rather tremble thou, ay, thou,
Outwitted by a woman, lest the scent
Of blood so noble, wafted o'er the Alps,
Arouse the men who scattered Varus' hosts !
And if thy purblind soul quail not to man,
Then quail before the gods, for here I lay
My hand in prayer on my son's head, and call
To those, the blest, who yonder throne in light,
And those who rule the shades of gloom below ;
These I implore to look down on my pangs,
To see how the caprice of brutish power
Constrained a mother to destroy her child ;
I call for vengeance for his precious blood,
For retribution upon thee and Rome,
Through hundreds, thousands of the years to come,
That so her children may through ages curse
This hour and thee !

CALIG. Fool! Call howe'er you will,
The gods, they hear you not——

THUSN. Yea, they do hear!
Voices I hear far off around me float,
And forms I see that glimmer through the mist.
A roar as of thunder when billows run high,
And nations on nations come marching by;
The ramparts crash down, the walls are laid low,
The heavens are aflame, the streams ruddy with
gore;
They come to chastise, they come to avenge,
And the glory of Rome, bloody Rome is no more!
Ho, victory, victory! hark, the acclaim!
From tongues that Germania moulded it came!
Ho, victory won by Germania's glaives!
The German spirit, I see it soar
From sea to sea, and from shore to shore!
Yes, ye gods of home, we no more are slaves!
And I see our oppressors in dust laid low
In vengeance for ages of bondage and woe,
Grovvelling at our feet in pain,
Crying aloud for grace in vain,
Arming themselves in vain!——

CALIG. Hence with the raving beldame! Drag her
hence!

Why do you stand there stricken dumb and pale?
She lies, her words are false——

THUSN. My words are true,
Sacred and solemn, as they are my last!

*(Stabs herself in the breast
with the sword.)*

As true as—that thy fetters, Rome, are burst—
And my free spirit freely seeks its home !

(Sinks down on the couch and dies.)

CALIG. She gone as well ! *(To CÆSONIA.)* Look,
though its light has fled,
Her eye still threatens ! 'Twas the very way
The old man looked ! Oh, cover up the bodies !

(Slaves spread the green coverlet over them.)

Outwitted by a woman ! Never, never !
No ! To despise you I will have my show !
Where's he that has the charge of it, the Ædile,
That managed matters here so vilely ? Where
Is Flavius Arminius ? As these
Have slipped my grasp, their kinsman shall be flung
To my pet puppies, the Hyrcanian lions.
Up ! fetch me Flavius Arminius straight !

CASS. Quick ! seek him out !

Enter CORNELIUS.

CORN. You seek in vain !

CALIG. In vain ?
Wherefore in vain ?

CORN. For Flavius Arminius,
Maddened by self-reproach, or craven fear,
I know not which, has fallen upon his sword ;
He was ashamed to live, he said, since by
His mother's hand his nephew had been slain !

CALIG. Dead, dead ! He also dead ! And you
stood by
Faint-hearted curs, and did not hold his hands ?

Oh, how I wish that all the Roman people
Had but one head! I'd know then what to do.
My festival, my games, I mean to have—
I will see blood, hear the death-rattle! Ay,
Some Jews, methinks, were recently brought in,
Men of the sect that they call Christians;
Let these then have a romp with my pet whelps!
Up! Range yourselves in order! Music! music!
A music meet for Cæsar's festival! (*Music begins.*)
To the Circus! Up, and raise triumphal shouts!
For I am victor, victor I will be!
Cry "Hail, hail, Cæsar! hail, Germanicus!"

GENERAL CRY. Hail, Caius Cæsar! hail, Germanicus!

(*Exit CALIGULA with CÆSONIA and the rest.*)

CASSIUS *seizes* CORNELIUS *by the hand,*
and leads him to the front of the stage.)

CASS. You see, time hurries on! 'Tis he or we!
Who e'er lived safely in a tiger's den?
Know you how the Prætorians stand disposed?

CORN. They are for us.

CASS. So is the Senate too.

CORN. Then, when do you suppose——

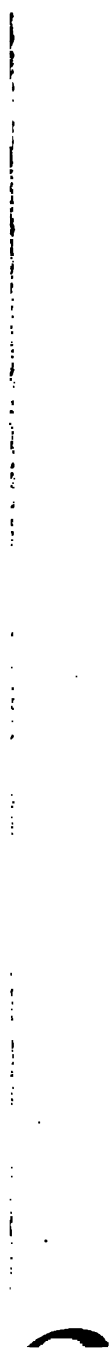
CASS. To-morrow!

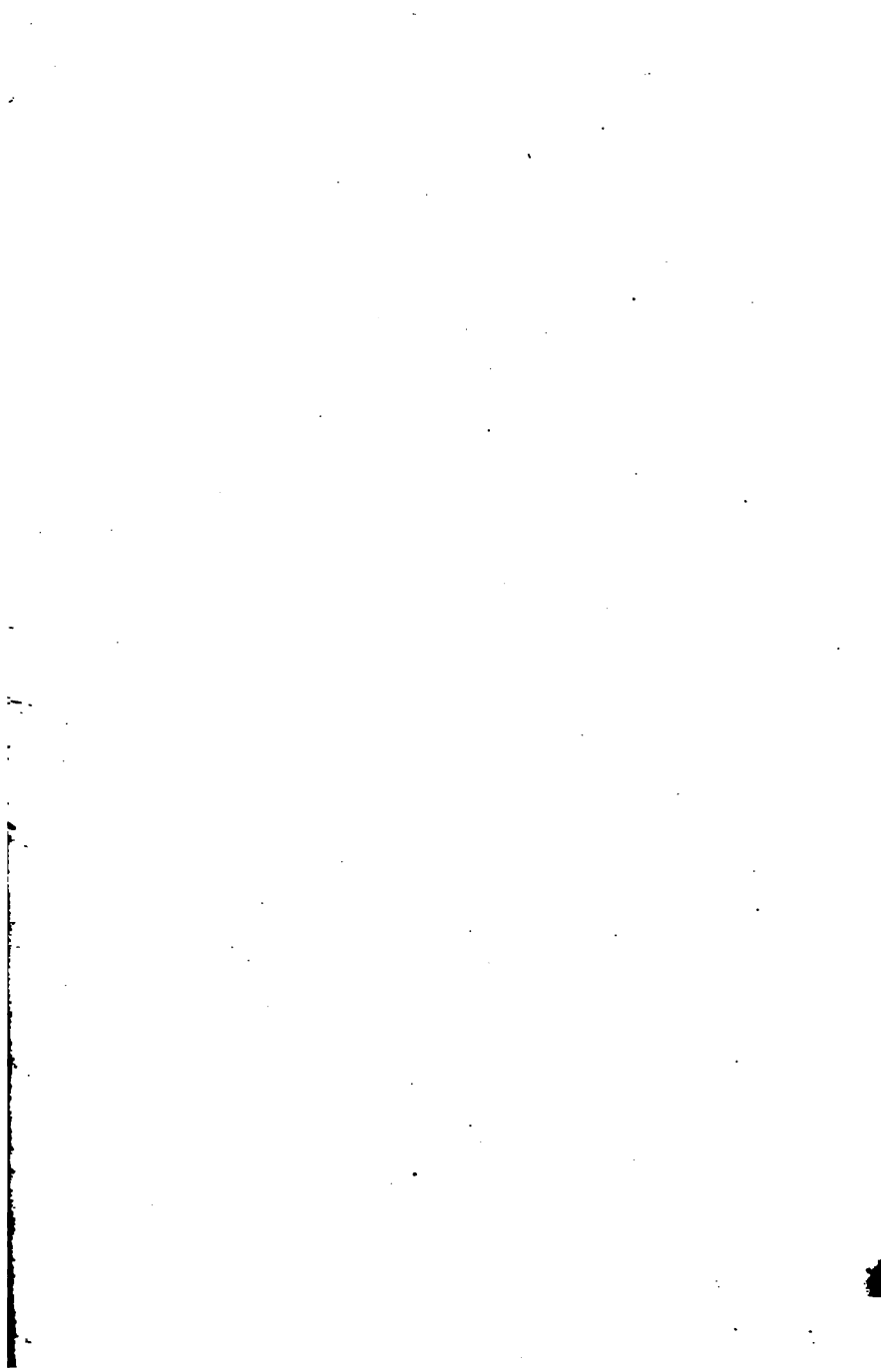
CORN. Good!

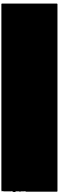
To-morrow let it be!

(*Curtain falls.*)

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